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**THE CHURCH IN CHANGING
SCOTLAND**

THE CHURCH IN CHANGING SCOTLAND

BY

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LONDON

JAMES CLARKE & COMPANY, LIMITED

9 ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.2

BV2870
D9

To
My Wife
who
Understands Why



PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN.

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1076961

FOREWORD

BY

THE VERY REV. JOHN WHITE, D.D., LL.D.

THE Author writes out of a wide experience of the Missionary work of the Church of Scotland, and his book is a valuable contribution to the study of the Church in its mission to the Scottish people. It is all the more valuable in that readers will dispute some of its theses.

Mr Dunnett brings to his task of re-thinking the Home aspect of the Church's work an intimate knowledge of what is being done in Highlands and Lowlands, in rural and urban parishes. His critical study of the Home Mission field comes at a most opportune hour. There is a keener and more sympathetic interest in the Home Mission problem as the fundamental task facing the united Church. A vision of Scotland for Christ is kindling a new enthusiasm in many hearts. There is a deeper sense of responsibility with regard to those who are outwith the Church. The great changes which have taken place in these late years have brought the Church face to face with a new and heavy task in town and city, and not least, the new housing areas.

There must be a wise adaptation of the resources, services and methods of the Church to the new conditions. All the available forces within the

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Church must be mobilised to secure the vigorous application of the parochial system which, faithfully worked, will reduce the numbers of non-church-going to a minimum. This parochial system on which this book lays emphasis calls for the enlistment of the rank and file of the Church in the work of evangelisation. Scotland will not be evangelised by the pulpit alone but by a witnessing pew living the Gospel and revealing it as a determining rule in society and business. The Scotsman cannot be converted by argument for he rejoices in debate. He can, however, be won by seeing the Gospel incarnated in the lives of the membership of the Church. This is the Home Mission task of the Church on which this book lays stress.

Mr Dunnett's book is much more than a critique of the organisation and the administrative side of the Church's work. He underlines the need for an evangelism, which relates the great central truths of Christianity, to the present hour and the present need in such a vital way as to make them equivalent to a new relation. The visible Church with its institutional life must have efficient methods if its religious life is not to suffer. Organisation is most essential, but organisation cannot relieve the agony of the modern world or provide men with the ideals of life ; and so the Author never fails to stress the important but forgotten point that efficiency of Church organisations must be secured by no other means than the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit.

The book provokes serious thinking on the whole important problem of the Home Missions of the Church. It presents a task calling for sacrifice, and is indeed a summons to the youth of Scotland

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to undertake new administration of faith and service. Mr Dunnett's whole argument constitutes a call for constant and convincing witness on the part of the membership of the Church until the Nation's life has been brought into complete obedience to the rule of Christ.

There must be no looking back once the plough handles are in our grip.

JOHN WHITE, D.D., LL.D.

PREFACE

I HAVE written these pages in the persuasion that Christian people are not only prepared to face up to criticism on their organised religious methods but are in these days insistent that we must not be bound in our endeavours to secure right methods. Only a fraction of home work has been touched on, but what I have done will, I hope, be the beginning of a new and intelligent interest in the problems which demand the Church's attention.

I am profoundly grateful to many who have encouraged and helped me. Especially do I offer thanks to Dr White for his Foreword ; to my brother, the Rev. G. V. Dunnett, O.B.E., B.D., and to Mr W. P. Livingstone, Editor of *Life and Work*, who read my manuscript and offered invaluable suggestions ; and to Miss Veitch who has so greatly reduced my labours.

No other than myself is responsible for the views herein expressed.

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CHAPTER I

WHERE THE CHURCH FAILS

A FIRST GLANCE

VERY daringly but under a strict sense of its necessity I am setting myself to rethink the home aspect of the Church's work.

If the Church does not remind itself that it must continue the work of Christ, and does not go to the ultimate source of all inspiration, then it cannot answer the challenge of those who resent its interference and proclaim their own individual right to believe and act as they themselves think fit. We speak in the name of God and we endeavour to carry on the mission of Christ amongst our fellow-men. It is no use discussing why it is that at this time of day after more than a thousand years of Christianity there should still be need for evangelistic work in the highways and byways of Scotland. It is sufficient that we note the need which actually exists.

Because of what I mean to say later on, I wish now to record my absolute conviction that the Church in Scotland has made great advance within memory, and certainly within the last hundred years. It is observable by all except the most blinded pessimist that life has developed enormously in so far as it has become increasingly honest, more

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unselfish, and more deeply permeated with the Christian spirit. The entire standard of life has been raised, and where we have cause to bemoan shortcomings these have pressed their attention upon us in part because of our more highly developed sense of what is right and truly Christ-like. There is no other agency or organisation in the country, in opposition to the Church or in separation from it, which can claim the same credit for this development. I do not exclude the educational and moral forces in the land, for these are instrumental in this direction only in so far as our teachers and social reformers are faithful to the principles maintained by the Church. It is, therefore, a serious fault, almost verging on betrayal, for anyone claiming connection with the Church to belittle the good it does in the country or to decry it as failing in an age which needs so much guidance and so much of its strength.

One of the greatest occasions for reform in our Church members lies just here, and, if it were effected, it would be a real step in reviving within the Church its power to touch and influence the lives of those who are without. We need a new sense of loyalty inside the Church. We need a new endeavour to look for all that is gracious and divine within its fellowship, a recognition of all the good that is being done quietly and zealously in the name of Christ, and we need a devotion on the part of all its members to respect and maintain its good name as the instrument of God to save the soul of Scotland.

Now when that is said, we dare not ignore what the Church is faced with in this age of insecurity

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and bewilderment. Each age seems to produce its own emphasis on particular vices and particular weaknesses. Amid much that is encouraging there is much that is sad and perplexing. The Church is no longer fighting against a grinding poverty amongst the people as it had to do in the nineteenth century. The poor we have with us still, but where the Church has to deal with the poor it has first of all to meet and attack the vices which have made for much of present-day poverty. Our lodging-houses in Glasgow and elsewhere have their quota of those who through mental or physical infirmities are unable to escape the precarious existence of a day-to-day livelihood. But many are the men and women who have had their chance and have squandered it through persistent vice. Men and women are ruined for all time, and large numbers are heading for the same moral destruction every day, through the twin vices of gambling and drink.

It is impossible for anyone at all interested in Home Mission work to ignore the tremendous hold these evils have on our national life. You, Church people, ask us to work a reformation in the lives of the submerged masses of the community ; you ask us to go in your name to the highways and byways and save the fallen and degraded ; but you do terribly little to help us by clear example and resolute public opinion. These vices are vices of excess, and many of us salve our consciences by saying there is no great harm in them in moderation. But in its evangelistic work the Church has to deal with thousands upon thousands of people whose moral stamina is lost, whose will-power is shattered, and whose only way of escape is an absolute and entire

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break with the subtle and governing power of these evils.

The experience of the Church in its Lodging House Mission is one of the most wonderful and most heartening, but it is being gained against these evils which to some extent are condoned by Church people. When the Church goes to the tinker with the message of Jesus Christ, the same battle has to be fought. When it sends its agents amongst the fruit-pickers the same curse has to be tackled. When it sets up its marquees in the summer camps on the Clyde and the Forth, where it touches the lives of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, it is presented with the same passions to subdue. The national life of the country is rotten at the present moment with those misguided methods of trying, at the least possible trouble to the individual, to get more out of life than is being put into it, and it cannot be left to the individual to effect the cure. The Church as a whole must proclaim a clean morality and a Christian conscience, and this it can only do when its members are loyal to its teaching.

We recognise that the function of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His redeeming love. The three thousand congregations spread over the whole country, while being fellowships of those who seek the way of life as it has been revealed in Christ, are also, in so far as they endeavour to work out the purpose of the Master, centres of evangelistic activity within the areas of their influence. Their charge is not merely their own inner prosperity and stability. They have, every one of them, the responsibility of bringing within the power of Christ all who are resident

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within their areas and not attached to any branch of His Church. This responsibility rests upon every Church member. Rivalries in the past made for duplication of effort in some areas and neglect in others. That day is now gone. Every congregation in Scotland will in a very short time have allocated to it a definite area which in almost every case ought to be perfectly workable. Within each of these areas it ought to be possible to know the religious circumstances of every individual and to keep trace of all who come and go. This will not be done without work.

At the present moment the work of most of our congregations is being left to the two or three. The day must come when those who appreciate all the benefits of Christian discipleship will also accept the obligations resting upon them to serve in the Kingdom of Him "Who came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for all."

The aim of the Church to-day is to bring to bear upon every one in the land the personal influence of those who form its membership. This cannot be done unless churches exist and congregations function within easy reach of the people. Every new housing scheme brings with it its own problem to the Church. We must follow the people and we must provide for their spiritual needs. So rapid has been the extension of the cities in these days that the Church has not been able to keep pace. Never was there a time less favourable for the enormous expense which the erection of these new charges must of necessity entail. But to refuse the needs of any one of these new communities is to

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invite the all too rapid development of what could only be sheer paganism—a menace to the life of the city which dare not be contemplated. Round the fringes of Glasgow, for example, there is a new population. This population is gathered very largely from areas served by the down-town churches. While they have called for consideration in their new community, their removal has tended to create a problem in many of the Churches of which they were originally members. It is fair to say that many of them were excellent members of their congregations. Their going to another area and their seeking congregational life in a new church was inevitable. If not for their own sakes, at any rate for that of their children, it is often desirable that they find their spiritual home nearer to their new home. But gradually we see the almost tragic result of the once flourishing congregations in the heart of the city being depleted of their active manpower and left weakened and, in some cases, disheartened, to fight a desperate battle in the midst of an indifferent population.

The whole aspect of Church life in the city is suffering a strange transformation. Individual congregations in the city will survive the change for many years with good success. Several factors will make for that. But there are already many instances where the congregations, which in their power and missionary zeal created and fostered daughter churches in the suburbs, have now, in their honourable if somewhat decrepit old age, to look to the outlying children for help and encouragement.

Glasgow is an excellent example of what must

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happen all over the land. The day of pure congregationalism is dead. No individual church which persists in fighting for its own ends can ever hope to live. East and West, rich and poor, small and large, the Church in Scotland must stand as one ; the problems of each congregation to be the problems of all. The link binding them all ought to be more than a name or the recital of a creed. It ought to be the bond of Christian service.

The evangelistic work of the Church suggests to many people something along the lines of a revival, a more or less passionate effort to stir, within a neglectful community, the white-heat enthusiasm for repentance and regeneration. No one should belittle the value of many of the revivals which at odd times have spread over the country. The Church has still room for some such quickening. But this quickening must proceed from the very heart of our congregations, and it must not cease till it has permeated the lives of the entire community.

In any effort towards evangelism, we must guard against two evils. We must avoid looking for quick returns ; we must not imagine that good has been effected when sudden conversions are hastily recorded and a few names are added to our Church rolls. The evangelising of the country must have in it the elements of permanency. We may have to sow seed whose growth is at first in the dark, hidden away in the souls of the people, and, then and always, making for a slow but steady development to rich and proper fruition. I imagine we grossly under-estimate the effectiveness of Christ's earthly ministry if we judge it by the number of His disciples. The influx to the Christian Church

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after Pentecost must surely have been the development of seed sown by the wayside by Christ Himself amongst a people who hid it away till the time of the green blade and the harvest ear.

The other evil is to work for a revival by fits and starts. The work of the Church is always revival, and it must always be in process. If special efforts be put forward from time to time, they ought never to be undertaken without careful preparation and sustained endeavour. Every scheme devised for the evangelising of Scotland, and every suggested method adopted, must ultimately rest on the power of the personal appeal. It is not how the Church as a whole stands in the estimation of the world that is going to bring men to Christ. It is the influence created and sustained by the individual believer ; it is how we each live our simple lives that is going to make or mar the witness of the faith that is within us. The evangelising of Scotland begins in my life and in yours. Its worth and its success depend on how closely we are living to the Eternal God, how nearly we are working from day to day in line with the Eternal Plan.

CHAPTER II

WOUNDS LEFT TO BLEED IN THE GLEN

THE COUNTRY PARISH

It is said of certain ministers that when they are in the country they are not content until they get into the town, and once they are in the town they long to get back into the country. One can understand a young minister seeking to win his spurs in a difficult charge in the town where work has not to be sought and indeed the days are too short in which to do all that a conscientious minister feels he has to do. The better educational facilities in town or city are most often the deciding factors where a small family is growing up in the manse. But that a country minister's duties are only less exacting ought never to be a justification for any man in reasonable health and vigour desiring the green fields and pleasant pastures of a rural parish. Problems exist in the country as well as in the town, and a minister's influence can be as powerful in the one sphere as in the other.

There is a sense of stability in a country parish which does not exist in the towns. Possibly this is the result of a longer history, for the rural parish goes back in form and many of its features to the Reformation at least, while the town in Scotland is

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the recent growth of little more than a hundred years. It is not so long since St. Cuthbert's parish was outside the city bounds of Edinburgh, and, as for Glasgow charges, the bulk of them are scarcely more than out of their infancy as city congregations.

Any study of ecclesiastical affairs is likely to be more exact if it is found possible to hold at arm's length anything in the nature of political controversy. The country problem, however, cannot be confined to the manse study. It must be regarded as touching upon the wider issues of rural depopulation, the housing of the farm-workers, educational opportunities and the facilities for transport. Possibly many of the troubles of the modern countryside are traceable to the depressed condition of agriculture, the low standard of wages, and the paltry opportunities offered to enterprising farm-labourers to rise above their circumstances and acquire farm land of their own.

Unlike the town, the country parish has up till now been very largely dominated by the laird. Much of the interest and, to a certain extent, the well-being of the neighbourhood, depended on the landowner. The Church did not escape this patronage. Even although the laird may have been the main heritor and thereby the chief party responsible for the preservation of Church fabric in the case of the former Church of Scotland, it has to be said to his credit that he was not always unmindful of the former United Free Church in the country places where it exerted a strong and wholesome influence. Nor is it to be imagined that the changed circumstances whereby there are no heritors will to any appreciable extent militate

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against the good will that the landowners have at all times shown towards the Church.

The landowner has himself had to suffer change. He is no longer the possessor of all he surveys. He has had to meet the economic demands of more democratic days, and many large estates have been broken up or changed hands entirely, not always to the advantage of the parish. It is no doubt mainly to the good that the modern farmer is very often the owner of his land. But the Church's experience generally has been, that something is gained where there is only one proprietor in the parish and not a multitude, whose resources are not such as to replace the tenderness which in difficult times the old aristocracy were able to display.

Under the new regime the question of housing may become acute. No farmer will want to keep in repair more cottages on his land than he will require for his workers, and the problem may easily arise as to the pensioners and widows whose lives have been spent for the greater number of their years in the one glen or on the same hill-side. Already, by way of individual concern, the minister finds difficulty in obtaining the assistance of a casual worker or some one ready to act as beadle, gravedigger and gardener.

It is to be feared that the farm labourer has never received his due at the hands of the farmer. The system of hiring in operation whereby the employer can hold off engaging his herds and hinds till the last possible day, cutting down the bargaining wage to the lowest penny, is unworthy of agriculture and degrading to the worker. No doubt the system tends to create district rates of wages, but the rate

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is never beyond the point under which the bad and thriftless farmer can afford to hire his workers. This is not a matter on which the Church can decide or seek to take any action, but it should never be possible for the countrymen to believe that the Church will always side with the employer at the expense of the employee no matter how unchristian be the treatment of the one by the other.

Partly due to the low rate of wages, and partly to the ignorance or idleness of the wives of the agricultural workers, the current idea in towns that good wholesome feeding is the rule in the country is almost wholly fallacious. (cf. Mr Seebohm Rowntree's book on *How the Labourer Lives*.) There is a singular lack of enterprise on the part of the housewife. It may be due to the exacting labour expected of the woman in the care and management of the "cow and pickle hens," and a desire to avoid the more prolonged processes necessary to provide a respectable meal. Scones and butter, potatoes, an occasional egg, and sometimes bacon with tea, badly infused, seem to serve the demands of the household. All the excellent food available is sent into market in order to make the little extra money which other necessities or extravagances demand. Attempts at the formation of evening classes in cooking for girls and young married women have been uniformly unwelcome. That there should be so much illness among children brought up in a pure atmosphere and fair surroundings can be attributed to the monotonous sameness of their feeding and the failure to use the good produce of garden and field so readily available.

Depopulation of the country parish is the out-

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standing concern not merely of the Church but of all who are interested in the well-being of the nation. Many causes contribute towards it. Already mention has been made of one of the lesser causes, mainly the lack of housing for those whose day is done in the business of agriculture but who would wish to end their lives in surroundings and under conditions familiar to them. The chief cause is no doubt the change in agricultural methods. The number of men required on farms to-day is greatly reduced from what it was a hundred or even fifty years ago. Much more land is going out of cultivation and an increase is taking place in the grazing of sheep and cattle. "The Preliminary Statement of the Agricultural Returns taken in Scotland as at 4th June 1933 shows that the total area under crops and grass amounts to 4,603,000 acres, comprising 3,018,000 acres arable land and 1,585,000 acres under permanent grass. The total acreage is the smallest recorded since 1876, while the area of arable land is the smallest recorded since the Returns were first taken in 1866, being less than 1932 by 28,000 acres. The area under permanent grass has increased this year (1933) by 9,000 acres, making the actual diminution in area under crop and grass 19,000 acres." (Agricultural Returns for Scotland 1933, Memorandum.) It needs no great calculation to realise what this must inevitably mean in the way of less employment for the farm worker. This same Return states, "horses used for agricultural purposes are fewer than in 1932 by 1,400, the total 114,300 being the smallest on record." It follows, as the Return also states, that there are 900 fewer regular workers in 1933

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compared with 1932. The Department of Agriculture for Scotland indicates that this reduction excludes occupiers of holdings, their wives and domestic servants. This is a serious diminution out of a total of 96,900 persons employed all the year round in 1932.

Justice is too seldom done to the ministers and Kirk Sessions in our country parishes who maintain the vigour of their congregations in face of such difficulties. For the effects are not merely half-empty churches. There is nothing to surpass the loyalty to the Church and the spirituality of many of our herds and hinds. In many districts their presence at divine service could be counted upon with steadfast regularity. They could never give liberally, for they never had the wherewithal to give, but many of them did not spare themselves to help, by their example and labour, for the maintenance of Christ's Kingdom in the countryside. Their children are awanting, as can be seen by the rolls in the day school.

An effect that is very greatly to be deprecated is indicated in the Memorandum from which extracts have been taken. Where arable land is still fairly extensive, and even where a considerable amount of grazing is done, there are seasons in the year when the ordinary staffing of a farm is inadequate. At harvest time and at lambing casual workers must be employed. In 1933 the number of these casual workers increased by 1,500. Some of them are immigrants with absolutely no interest in the area within which for the season they have been able to find employment. But what is worse from the point of view of the Church—many of them come

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into contact with the best of our country lads, bringing with them a moral licence often mistaken for independence and manliness. If these casual or seasonal workers are to be cared for by the Church in the name of Christ, then the problem of depopulation should mean not less but more work for the minister.

Because of this we are bound to ask if the policy of the Church is right when in its zeal for economy and its enthusiasm for unions it is combining country charges with centres several miles apart. Despite increasing facilities for transport it is highly desirable that the minister be visible during the week as well as audible on Sunday, and his visibility should be something more than rushing in a motor car to a house by the road side, and rushing back to his manse six or ten miles distant. The very scattered nature of the country population and the scanty opportunities for making the best use of their leisure hours make it imperative that the Church should not lend its hand too readily to add to the solitudes of the countryside.

This is all the more to be emphasised because a similar policy is being extensively put into operation by the County Councils in their system of education. Time was when the minister and dominie were guides, philosophers and friends to farmer and farm servant. The schoolmaster was registrar, clerk to the parish council, and general factotum to the parish in a very practical sense. Now he is going the way of the old "parochial," a historic figure who once was and never shall be again. The country school is depleted largely of its children, partly because large families are no longer the order of

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the day, but also because the newer, cheaper method of education is to transport the children after they reach the age of eleven or twelve to central schools in the nearest provincial town, or fair-sized village. It may in the long run be better for the children themselves ; it can never be a good thing for the countryside. It is more than doubtful if the bulk of these children will ever want to go back to, and spend their lives in, the solitudes which were only realised by them in the wider interests of the town. Yet it is the disappearance of the schoolmaster himself that calls for regret.

The minister is left oft-times by himself, surrounded by apparently but not really discontented farmers who believe in nothing cultural other than turnips and crops, who will seldom take any initiative and only wish to make their farms pay as rapidly as possible. Some can be persuaded to be elected to the County Council, and their presence there has the appearance at least of a certain amount of democratic interest. If truth were told, however, the estimate of their worth as councillors is to be measured by their capacity to thwart any progressive movement in order to keep down the rates. The minister is often rather suspect by the farmers as one who would further social and educational improvements regardless of their cost—a thoughtless and utterly untrue suspicion.

Where the exceptional farmer is found, he is exceptionally good. But the good farmer to-day does not require so many workers, as he has advanced with the times and these times are nothing if they are not mechanical. By means of all the varied and complicated machines to be found on

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our farms an enormous amount of time and labour is saved every year. In so speeding up his work the farmer is now in a better position to defy the uncertainties of our Scottish weather. One cannot but be scornful of the more primitive methods still persisting in outby farms, where a binder is not employed, or the cream is still skimmed off the milk left to settle in shallow basins. The machinery now used, whether on inby or outby farms, is all standardized, and any breakages can easily be replaced by application to the makers or agents for new parts. This has meant the disappearance of the craftsmen from the country villages. Scotland is full of smithies, derelict, or opened only once a week or even only once a month. The country joiner may remain in certain places, but his work also suffers from standardisation. The apprentice, where he exists, is no longer required to learn the building up of a window frame or the construction of a panelled door. These arrive all ready made with little or nothing to do but set them in position against rough ducts driven into the side of the masonry. The beautiful workmanship hand-wrought by smith and carpenter is gone, or treasured by the artistically inclined as possessions, rare and curious. It is more than can be hoped for that the glory of these things can ever return. But their going has left the nation poorer and the countryside more desolate.

There is no pretension towards reviewing all the changes and causes which go to the impoverishment of the countryside. Enough, I hope, has been indicated to stimulate the reader to examine the main features as he has opportunity. One cannot

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see very well how the evil is to be remedied or its progress held in check. Sporadic efforts are made by well-disposed people and organisations to further the promotion of home industries. Yet the general effect is small. While these benefit the people already resident, it is more than doubtful if their institution entices others to leave the town for the peaceful life of a rustic. Schemes of afforestation are devised by Government, and here and there, particularly in the highlands, small communities are at work planting the hillsides with young trees. This can only mean remunerative employment for a few for a limited period, but its advantage to the country cannot be denied. It represents a policy which has been much too long delayed. The development of electric power schemes, such as those in the Lochaber district and in Galloway, cannot reasonably come under the category of industries meant to safeguard the prosperity of the country parish. These public works constitute the introduction of conditions entirely alien to country life, and their ultimate end seems likely to mean the setting up in a new area of a township with distinctly urban character and influence.

The new township of Kinlochleven is a striking instance of this, where a cosmopolitan population is striving to weld itself into a homogeneous community and succeeding remarkably well. There is always the danger in a situation such as this that a large population dependent exclusively on the success and prosperity of one industry may find itself one day sunk into the depths of distress and melting away as quickly as it came. Ballachulish, close by Kinlochleven, once flourishing through the

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quarrying and exportation of slates, is now but a skeleton of what it was when the quarries were in full operation.

Despite these industrial settlements in the midst of our rural areas, the population shows no sign of remaining stationary, let alone the possibility of increase. The problem is little short of being world wide. In his book on *Problems of Village Life* (Home University Library), Mr Bennett points out that "the rural inhabitants of countries so diverse as, to go no further, Germany, Italy and the United States, are gradually migrating to urban centres or distant lands across the sea." In England figures are quoted to show that 33,000 adult agricultural labourers emigrated in 1911 as against 9,000 in 1906. Many will recall that that was a period when everything was done to encourage emigration in the interests of the nation. Fortunately war put an end to that short-sighted policy, and in recent years the number of those who have left the land in this country for that of other countries is small. Yet the migration to the cities is growing to an alarming extent. Witness the necessity for so many new housing schemes promoted by the city corporations, themselves encroaching on land so recently under the plough and reckoned part of the rural area.

All this cannot fail to be of interest to the Churchman who is concerned with the social and political advancement of the nation. It is surely not outwith the province of the Church to keep a watchful eye at any rate on the changing conditions of life in the land. At the same time, with conditions as they are, what are the needs and opportunities lying to

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the hand of the Church? It is a curious comment on the mentality of a student and a public-spirited man to find Mr Bennett, who throughout his book on the *Problems of Village Life* is constantly fighting against tradition which he characterises as the greatest hindrance to rural development, advocating the provision of brotherhoods of unmarried clergymen, working several parishes from a common centre.

No doubt such an advocate will be welcomed by those within the Church whose sole objective is to run the Church on strictly business lines with the closing down of the unprofitable branches in the interests of the more flourishing "central stores." It cannot be sympathetically received by those whose desire it is to promote the well-being of the agricultural labourer "who plods slowly on in the ways which his forefathers have trodden for uncounted generations." (*Problems of Village Life*, p. 38.) This is a reversal to the days of monastic communities which had their uses in the feudal ages, but history tells of their part in the thwarting of individual enterprise and their enrichment at the expense of wide areas under their sway whose spiritual interests were so consistently ignored. The plea must be made for a resident ministry which lives close to the people and can lead and further all their moral and social as well as spiritual interests.

Truly spiritual though the majority of rural workers are, it must not be assumed that all is well in the country and only in the towns and cities are to be found the vices peculiar to our age. Into the deeper seams of human depravity there is no

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need to dig. They are common to town and country life. But there are stains on the life of our country side which need the attention of the Church. The modern vice of gambling has many devotees in the cottages, and it is sad to think of the number of women who are ever ready to put a shilling or two on a horse. Although this is not peculiar to any one district it is certainly most prevalent in hunting areas, where the influence of sporting tenants and others is on the side of a gamble.

The pleasure-seeking propensities of the towns have in recent years found a place in the country. From the days of deadly dull routine, with no opportunity for excitement beyond the village concert and the annual sports, to the craze for greater happiness and wider interests has been rapid transit in recent years. Motor transport has made much possible that distance from any large centre prevented the youth of the country sharing. Nowadays many of our agricultural workers are able to avail themselves of the cheap fares on railways and buses, and are to be found on a Saturday afternoon watching a League football match. Picture houses in the central towns draw not a few of their *clientele* from the rural areas. Nothing harmful in themselves, but assuredly they are signs of the times.

A new spirit is abroad, rebelling against the restrictions of country life, claiming a share of what are regarded as the good things of the world, and refusing to be put off with anything that the patronising charity of their "betters" would seek to impose on them. The Church has something to do in meeting this awakening of the restive soul. The Woman's Guild did an immense amount of

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good along this line when it realised the transport possibilities and fostered the meetings of parish guilds under a provincial council. To have succeeded in providing many of the women with an excuse to leave the parish for half a day and meet those of other parishes is indeed a creditable achievement. How long this success will continue will depend on the development of these council gatherings along lines more entertaining than listening to speeches by church deputies or weary missionaries. It is not beyond the wit of woman to discover ways and means of retaining the interest of our country womenfolk and giving them full share in the carrying out of useful and interesting projects.

The Church would do well to ally itself with the advancing success of the Scottish Community Drama Association. The Report of this body for 1932 shows a membership made up of 208 clubs and W.R.I. Federations and 277 individuals (485 in all). During the year 249 entries were made in the festivals held in 44 centres in Scotland with a total attendance of nearly 40,000. There is undoubtedly a dramatic sense in our people which ought to be cultivated, and the Church might do very much more than simply approve of any steps taken to give it free scope. If the lingering traces of a drab Puritanism could be obliterated much encouragement should be given to the restoration of country dancing. At present the only encouragement given to any form of dancing is too frequently the self-interested action of inn-keepers who in many cases have erected a wooden dancing hall behind the inn, to which are invited all who

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are willing to spend what little they have foolishly. The public hall is seldom used for anything but occasional political meetings, the coming together once a week of young halfpinks who are mildly enthusiastic over carpet bowls, and the dance which is so easily arranged for upon the slightest pretext. Club life is wellnigh impossible to maintain in country places, and not even the introduction of wireless has solved the problem of the useful occupation of leisure hours. No mention of the Church's place in the country would be complete without reference to the work of Mr Pratt, the artist-evangelist under the Home Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland. His arrival in his caravan has often made an irresistible appeal to the people of a country parish, and though he has come to them with the message of the Church not unfamiliar to them, he has given it pictorial vividness and enhanced it with his own winning personality.

The country minister in the past has had just cause to feel that he has been fighting a lone battle with little of the support of the whole Church or even of the comradeship of his brethren. With greater facilities through motor transport much of this sense of isolation can be removed, and the day may yet come when a closer bond will be established between the parish minister in the country areas and his brethren in the towns and cities. The Church is strong in its urban charges, but it would be a grave error to forget that it has a mighty heritage in the country to be guarded and cherished for generations to come.

CHAPTER III

THE EXCLUSIVE HIGHLANDER

THE HIGHLAND PROBLEM

As I write this in the Isle of Skye, the waters of Uig Bay are dancing in the sunlight, cattle are silhouetted on the hill tops lazily munching the pasture which is just shading into brown. In the flat edging the shore women are tossing the hay and here and there a boy is scything the corn. There are no men about. Presently a long black line is seen moving slowly up the hill-side, zig-zagging along the hairpin road from some croft hidden from view. For the last two hours the mourners for this highland funeral have been gathering from all airts. In ones and twos they have leisurely trudged along in their Sunday clothes, resigned to the necessity of a whole day being spent in this last service of neighbourliness to one who has gone from their midst. Every man from the townships of Kilmuir, Uig and Earlish seems to be here. I can imagine this is the only occasion upon which there is common action and common sympathy.

In this little bight there stand three churches, and only two days before there were three separate services all held at the same time. These same men passed each other on the road with stern determina-

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tion that nothing would make them worship together. There is not a whit of difference in the message of the three churches. The three buildings are so close together that there is no question of convenience. Neither does personality enter into the matter, for in one church a lay missionary conducts the service, in the other an elder has come from Port-na-long for the day, and in the third supply holds the fort during a vacancy. No one is able to explain why Church union cannot be effected in such an area. The advantages are so patent. The good effect on the communal life is so undoubted. Only the mind of the highlander is so inscrutable. A lowlander can say this with impunity, for no highlander will dare to explain the why and the wherefore. "We must wait till time works a change" is the regular and consistent sentiment. The only obvious fact we are told is that you cannot coerce the people.

All the features of rural life mentioned in the previous chapter are to be found with slight modifications in the highland areas.

Depopulation goes on more rapidly than the lover of the highlands would like. The traditional idea is that this is in the main due to the deliberate policy of clearances. The highlander has a long memory. Grievances linger and are harboured against some distant day of retribution. The slightest knowledge of what these clearances meant in the early years of the nineteenth century will not allow anyone to deny the brutalities associated with them. Yet after reading Mackenzie's book on *The Highland Clearances*, the conviction remains that there was certain justification for the policy of

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the landowners, and the putting of this policy into effect only anticipated the inevitable. The truth is, the depopulation of the highlands is forced upon the nation by economic pressure. The standard of living is increased beyond the capacity of the land to sustain large communities. Even so doughty a champion of the highland under-dog as Mackenzie admits, with reference to Sutherlandshire, where the biggest clearances took place, that "The county has not been depopulated—its population has been merely arranged after a new fashion." Since these days the policy of the highlander himself has been that of the eagle with her young. It is questionable if there are more than four or five per cent. of the population who have not spent a considerable part of their lives away from the home glen and returned in due course with considerable savings to live in more or less peaceful retirement.

The Highland congregation is never a body of young people. In the case of certain islands where the young men spend the summer on yachts and the young women go to the fishing, the winter months may see the age level of the congregation lowered. But, on the whole, the experience of the minister is that the highlander's interest is more world-wide than that of the lowlander, for his family goes far afield in search of a means of livelihood.

One would think this cosmopolitan life would help to break down the prejudices that hinder Church unity in the highlands ; but apparently not. The emigrant, whether he is in Canada or in Glasgow, whether he sails the high seas or polishes the brass

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on the yacht of some English plutocrat, seldom loses his mental attitude. He returns in middle life to the old croft to follow on after his parents with their nurtured animosities and their parochial exclusiveness. The highlander never looks forward. He lives essentially in the past. Take for instance one local explanation of the multiplicity of Churches in this compact little area of Uig in Skye. It is two-thirds Free Church because of the Disruption. There is nothing distinctive about its teaching to prevent unity with the other Churches. But its people will have little or nothing to do with the Church of Scotland because the memory of the hardness of the Disruption still remains. The Church of Scotland and the lairds were thought to be one, and it is not forgotten that sites were almost impossible to secure when in '43 it was proposed to build new churches for the dissenters. With much less readiness will they associate with the old United Free congregation, for these are as disloyal brothers who represent distinction without difference.

Just as the highlander lives in the past, so he is to a large extent ruled by the older members of the community. The highland elder is of much more significance than the elder elsewhere. He directs public opinion and supervises religious if not moral conduct. It is only the daring and revolutionary in a township who would venture to attend any other church without the full consent and approval of the elder. The old highlander on occasion can be a terrible tyrant who hates tyranny in any other person. Above all his will must count.

So far as the future is concerned there are several points to be noted. It is in everyone's heart that

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unity should be striven for. What may be said to be the lines along which we must move? No one will ever effect any advance in Church matters in the highlands who does not recognise the deep spiritual note of their religion. Good preaching to the highlander is not flippancy or subtle analysis or linguistic achievement. What to the lowlander looks a stolid indifferent group of listeners is generally a curiously sensitive body of keenly critical souls seeking the mystery of life in a somewhat fierce and fearful expression of Almighty power and purpose. Rhetoric is as nothing compared with righteousness, and if this be lacking not all the silvery words of an Apollos will secure the sympathy of the highlander. Any attempt to present the message of the Church in the cultured mode beloved of the lowlands is immediately suspect as being evidence of contemptible modernism.

How is the Church to meet this attitude and overcome the extreme effects of it? It must first of all recognise the value of the highland standpoint. It is a new experience for the Church to be able to survey its domain as so extensively national. The Church of Scotland is now so large it must realise that there ought to be room within it for all types of adherents and all methods of religious approach. It should be able to satisfy the needs of the high church party and the extreme low.

From the point of view of the Church of Scotland it must be recognised that in many Gaelic areas it is distinctly in the minority, and the reason is not far to seek. Its spirit is no less deep than that belonging to its neighbours. It has the strength which others cannot command so far as finance is concerned. It

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has age and tradition, two qualities which appeal to the highlander, but in the past it has not troubled to see that its ministry was adequately represented. Where our Church is pitifully weak the history of the ministry in the last century will scarcely bear examination. In certain areas the devastation of the secessions and disruptions has been amazingly made up by the unostentatious but singularly effective ministries of faithful men.

The trouble now is that there exists a vicious circle. Congregations remain weak because of weak ministries, and it is wellnigh impossible to get the required type of minister to go to these areas where the Church of Scotland counts for so little. The threatening policy of a dead level of minimum stipends must inevitably harden this state of affairs in the highlands. Preferential treatment may have its faults, but with judicious handling it could make for the strengthening of our weaknesses and the safeguarding of our interests in the blind spots so far as the Church of Scotland is concerned. In stating this we do not depreciate the excellent service rendered in the highlands and islands by the Free Church and the Free Presbyterian Church. They are indeed worthy offspring of the Old Mother. But if unity be desirable, then there ought to be no part of the land where evidence of the Church of our Fathers is weak or lacking.

By some means or other attempts might reasonably be made to get the leaders of the Free Church and those of the Church of Scotland to see how far progress could be made towards a real union of the Church in Scotland. One thing that cannot be allowed to happen is that the Church of Scotland

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should lose its hold on any part of the highlands, being content—as some ill-advised people would have us to be—to leave the religious supervision of these areas to another Church. This cannot be allowed, as it is entirely out of line with the general trend of life in Scotland. More and more the demarcation between lowland and highland Scotland is disappearing. To all who really know the highlands much of what has been stated will appear more or less a caricature of what prevails in many parts. The writer, however, has been concerning himself up to this point with the western islands, where most truly the Gael is to be found at his best.

On the mainland and in the extreme southern of the islands the influence of the Sassenach has made considerable inroads. Perhaps Islay is one of the most striking instances of a vitiated highland area. There you may find traces of the true Celt, the Ayrshire farming stock, Welsh miners, and the farmed out parochial children of Gorbals or Motherwell (it does not matter which). But geographically the highland line is receding swiftly towards the west coast of the mainland, till one can readily imagine that in less than another 100 years the curious will require to cross the Minch to hear Gaelic as a spoken language. Not all the fervour of the leaders of An Comunn Gaidhealach can stop the tide. My predecessor in the Church, Dr Dunlop, used to say that every highlander could speak English when it became a matter of pounds, shillings and pence. To-day, in spite of and perhaps because of the artificial revival of Gaelic study, the young people resent the idea that they are so deficient in English as to prefer Gaelic, and they take

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every opportunity of worshipping in English, rather than Gaelic. This statement may not be liked by the highland reader but he knows only too well that it is true.

What are the facts so far as the Church itself can show them? According to a law of the General Assembly the Presbyteries require to report every five years on the number of charges within their bounds where Gaelic is essential, and where it is desirable in the minister. For a number of years this has been in abeyance, but in 1933 it was made effective on the express request of a highland presbytery. Great difficulty was being experienced in getting Gaelic-speaking ministers for certain vacant parishes starred as being those where Gaelic was essential, and yet for many years Gaelic services had practically never been held. The returns for that year make interesting comparison with those for the year 1908. (See Appendix I.) The number of Gaelic charges is slowly decreasing, not because of their disappearance, but because the Sassenach tongue is pushing the native language into the position of a secondary medium.

There is real regret in this survey. Take away the isolating effect of a different tongue and you deprive the people inevitably of their distinctive characteristics. Still the fact cannot be gainsaid, the differentiation is rapidly disappearing. The Scottish people are more and more being welded into one. It is right that it should be so, but that is another question which must be touched on elsewhere. Meanwhile, however, it would be well for the friend of the highlands to cease pretending that they need special treatment because their people

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are only to be understood by the highlander. There is as much nonsense and humbug in that attitude as in the idea that the Fifer cannot deal with the Aberdonian, or that Glasgow and Edinburgh are poles asunder.

The Church must endeavour to get highlander and lowlander to take common part in its service and support. It must reveal itself as able to minister alike to both. This can be done only by one Church, and let us hope that in the course of the years, not too far distant, it shall be done by a Church which contains the best and has shed the worst features of all.

Mention has been made of the deep spiritual note which characterises the religion of the highland areas. The emphasis on it may help to explain the obvious neglect by the Church in the matter of the social development of the highlands. Many of our ministers and elders have taken an active part in public work and done everything in their power to promote the interests of the people. This is especially true in the direction of education. A very large number of lads who enter upon careers of distinction in the professions owe an immense debt of gratitude to many ministers who have not only encouraged but coached them in subjects for their initial examinations. The bursary systems, which have been so long in operation specially for Gaelic speaking scholars and students, have never been operated on a purely financial basis. Each bursar has the personal sympathy and guidance of ministers. Each is under the careful and, it is not too much to say, affectionate oversight of the Church from the day he enters the secondary

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department of the school till he is fairly launched into the regular work of his profession. The Church does not stint itself in the interest of Gaelic-speaking boys and girls. Were it not for the public spirit of the ministers many of the benefits associated with public services would be wanting in several areas. In this respect the minister is still leader of his flock. Yet there are serious deficiencies in the life of these townships cut off from the main stream of social enterprise. For example, it is a rare occasion to find anything in the nature of a public hall or a church hall where in the long winter evenings the young people of the community can foregather for pastime or wholesome entertainment. When asked what the people do in winter time the invariable reply is that they have their Ceilidhs and as for the young people they go about the roads.

It is surely no small matter that these people, so industrious in the summer months, should be left to idle away the dreariest part of the year. The church ought to be the centre of social life in all the townships, and it is not beyond the imagination of the ministers to devise ways and means of preventing the idle hands that Satan delights to use for mischief. This idleness is a modern invention of the devil. It is within memory that during the winter months one could not enter a cottage without coming upon a busy scene of carding and spinning. No doubt it was a necessity then. It was a source of much needed income. Now with old age pensions and the readier flow of money in the highlands the people decline to trouble themselves with the byways of industry, and there is consequently much more leisure.

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The Church must not fail to educate the people to a right and profitable use of that leisure. Many of the congregations in the south are bleeding to death through over-organising, but there is a happy mean, and it is time the highland section of the Church was bestirring itself to do something more than conduct Sunday services and hold a weekly prayer meeting. Little or nothing is being done for the children either by way of Sunday school or anything else, and nothing is expected of them until they are buxom or bearded.

There is infinite scope in this direction for the guilds. Hitherto the Woman's Guild has allowed itself to degenerate into a revenue-producing agency for town and city congregations. Its record in the country areas has been pathetic and in the highlands practically negative. Had it been alert and up to date there could never have been any room for the Women's Rural Institute. It is not too late even yet to learn something of the wider opportunities to its hand and to secure its proper place in the life of the country. Tributes must be paid to the new interests which the Women's Rural Institute has brought to so many solitary lives. It has done great work. But the opinion can be ventured that there is no permanence in its present structure. It lacks the democratic qualities, and its objects are mainly selfish and self-centred. When the guilds get to work in the highlands and islands they will find a response which will astonish them, provided they go about their work in a wise and cautious manner.

CHAPTER IV

EACH CHURCH FOR ITS OWN SO LONG AS IT PAYS

GLASGOW

ONE almost hesitates to state the problem of Glasgow even in its broadest lines, such is its immensity and complexity. It is doubtful if some people realise that there is any problem peculiar to Glasgow. The fact that it has a population of 1,069,000, representing all sorts and conditions of human life, indicates no more to these people than that Glasgow continues to flourish, that the depression in its industries, particularly in that of ship-building in recent years, is but a passing phase, and that there is and always will be the assurance of plenteous prosperity where so large a community hangs together.

It depends from what point of view a survey is made whether there is ground for optimism or cause for a serious and somewhat gloomy outlook. The main problem before the Church is how to rearrange and redistribute its forces to meet the requirements of so varied a population. The rapid growth of the city and the internal disturbances of the Church have combined to create a deplorable state of overcrowding of congregations in certain districts and scanty provision of real efficient organisation in others. In 1832, when the Church was fired with

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a new zeal for increased accommodation for its potential worshippers, the population of the city of Glasgow totalled only 203,000. Even then the sudden influx of people found the Church utterly unprepared to meet the increasing needs.

The bounds of the Presbytery of Glasgow at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as they do to-day, included Eaglesham in the south and Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch in the north. The population included within the area in 1801 was 84,082, and this increased to 208,103 in 1831. For the spiritual direction of this rapidly multiplying population, there were 44 Church of Scotland churches and 45 others, including Scottish Episcopal and Roman Catholic, i.e. 89 churches, on the average of one to every 2338 of the population, and one Church of Scotland congregation to every 4729 of the population. The trouble at that time was one of distribution. The Barony parish with one church and one chapel of ease served a population of 77,385. Gorbals with one church had a population of 35,194. The parish of the Tron Kirk with a population of 7529 had no less than 19 chapels of ease attached to it extending from Maryhill to Shettleston.

It is an interesting reflection on the uncertainty of human foresight and the changes that time demands that some of the churches erected only a hundred years ago are now said to be superfluous and are being closed up, or—to use what is often little more than a euphemistic term—are being transferred. The church extension policy in Glasgow to-day is necessarily the destruction of the results of the church extension policy of that period,

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although it naturally follows as the night the day. Church extension is generally discussed elsewhere, and there the situation in Glasgow is dealt with in some detail. But it is not inopportune here to indicate something of the weakness of the Church's present position in regard to its distribution. We are indebted to the Rev. R. Howie, Rockcliffe Church, for many of the following particulars.

There are thirteen wards in the city, within which the individual congregations would seem each to be responsible for the pastoral oversight of over 7000 souls. The figures show a total population in the thirteen wards of 480,986, and for the spiritual direction of this there are only 67 congregations. Over against this Mr. Howie points out that in seven wards with a population of 150,932—less than a third of that for the thirteen wards—there are 65 congregations representing the manageable proportion of 2322 to a congregation.

These figures are instructive to those who can read them aright, but they require further detail and explanation. Where the population is so adverse to the Church's successful work, the evil is aggravated by many factors. The wards with the largest populations are also the poorest, with a vast amount of overcrowding. They include, for example, Dalmarnock and Cowcaddens, the two wards with the largest amount of overcrowding in the city. It will be found that the mass of the population in many of these wards are living in such circumstances as to make it almost impossible for the Church to minister to them at all adequately. The conditions in which these people have their being are a disgrace to any form of civilisation, and

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no Church which attempts to preach to them the Gospel of Christ has any right to expect the ready acceptance of the message which for them is so utterly unreal and ineffective. There is a state of mind which detests the presentation of facts as they are to be revealed in such wards as are indicated. The tender-hearted are so deeply affected by the depressing things of life that they wonder so many are anxious to bring into the limelight the sordidness of the city's plague-spots while ignoring the light and contentment of the West End.

It is almost inevitable that in a city of the size of Glasgow several sections of the community do not know how the others live. From all points of view this is wrong, and not the least part of the Church's task is to break down this segregation of sympathy and understanding. At the union of 1929 this consideration weighed with the two former presbyteries and compelled them to continue in forming one presbytery inclusive of all the charges in Glasgow. It is not all to the good that a presbytery should be so large as to consist of over 590 representatives, but any division of the city to obviate the unwieldiness of so great a body, would intensify the lack of co-operation which is still a weakness in the Church's work in Glasgow. Geographically the best division might be four presbyteries in all—a presbytery for all charges north of the Clyde and west of a line between Jamaica Bridge and Maryhill along Renfield Street and Cowcaddens ; one for all east of that line still north of the Clyde ; one to the south and west of Eglinton Street ; and the last to the east. Such a division would encourage the congregations in the

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west end and south west to revel in their prosperity, while it would group together the congregations that are less strong financially and are faced in the east with immense and depressing problems. The present entirety of the Glasgow Presbytery has undoubtedly, as its ideal at any rate, the combination of strength and weakness, of congregations blessed with financial and human resources together with those struggling constantly to make ends meet and to find adequate man power to direct and promote their regular and necessary organisations.

In the east of Glasgow in particular many of the congregations are nobly struggling in face of inevitable decay. Their very success is hastening their demise, for their members recruited from the adjacent properties prove in practice that the stabilising effect of their religious experience makes for increasing prosperity and a growing self-respect. This leads to a desire for better conditions. Neither the houses once accepted by them in the familiar surroundings, nor the society of their neighbours will longer suffice. Gradually they remove to better homes and more pleasant neighbourhoods, with consequent loss to the remaining congregations.

Glasgow is a city of self-made men, and to their credit be it said not a few of them are proud of the fact and loyal to the quarter of the city where they were humbly born and brought up. It is not always that the attachment to the old congregation is readily broken, though the home be removed several miles distant. Many of the east end or down town congregations are dependent financially and otherwise on loyal members whose improved circumstances have allowed this trans-

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ference of residence but have not interfered with their loyalties. But good as this is in some respects its value endures only for a generation. The children grow up in other surroundings, acquire new friendships, and steadily develop new church loyalties of their own. Every church extension charge set up in Glasgow in recent years has created a real problem in the heart of the city, where it has meant a more or less severe drain on the declining congregations. Certain prosperous congregations in the heyday of their youthful exuberance have piously cast evangelic eyes towards the poorer parishes in the heart of the city and expended considerable sums of money in setting up missions there as an outlet for their superfluous energies and presumably for the good of the districts. But this has merely aggravated the evils. It has meant the weakening of the existing congregations in the districts by setting up a rival congregation too lavishly endowed alongside them, with which, in their straitened circumstances, they cannot hope to compete.

That it is an evil from many points of view is too clearly revealed by the fact that even while the need for continuing such missions is obviously outgrown, the self-righteousness and vanity of their promoters will not allow them to withdraw. Surely there is a distinct call upon the wealthier daughter churches in the suburbs to help the aged mother churches in the city where the struggle is undoubtedly fiercest, but such help should be given in full recognition of the existing parochial organisation, by providing workers within the congregation where these are needed or giving such financial aid as shall mitigate or entirely remove the constant and soul-destroying

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anxieties of a poor but godly people. It must not be denied that any system of assistance carries its own dangers. There is always the danger of a spirit of dependence, accompanied by a sense of grievance ungratefully cherished against the benefactors, in the hearts of the receiving congregations. There are also too easily acquired on the part of the liberal congregation an attitude of patronage and a desire to interfere in the work of the poor congregation in the belief that he who pays the piper is entitled to call the tune. Perhaps this readiness to help and the unmistakable occasion for assistance could be regularised to advantage, if the presbytery, or some association, collected the gifts of congregations and administered them according to the requirements of the various needy parishes. Of course, a curtailment of individual interest would take place and a diminution of contributions would follow, but it is believable that the lesser means of assistance so organised would be more beneficial to the Church's work and very much more to the credit of the contributors.

It is not out of place to point out that the plight of many of our down town congregations to-day is due in large measure to lack of foresight in the earlier years of their existence. Financially the only solution of the down town parish is endowment. In the heyday of their prosperity many of the Glasgow congregations lived in a state of luxury peculiar to their succeeding generations without the least concern as to how it might fare with the church when the districts declined. Not a few of those churches whose ministers are now on the minimum stipend lived at one time from hand to mouth even although the hand was well filled and

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the mouth was spacious. The children (while to them no blame can accrue) are reaping according to the scanty sowing of their parents. But it is a sad reflection on present day comfortable congregations who are in a position to go on for an adequate endowment but do not, that they fail to see before their very eyes the results of similar neglect. There is not more reason to believe that Hyndland Road or Pollokshields will maintain its prosperity a hundred years after this than there is good reason to know there once was equal prosperity in Duke Street and Rotten Row.

It is pertinent to ask how the parochial system is going to operate under the reunited Church in a city of the size of Glasgow. With the areas all carefully delimited and assigned satisfactorily to the individual congregations, how are these going to fulfil their peculiar responsibilities compatible with the maintenance of their existing congregational life? Take a hypothetical but typical case. A church not a mile from George Square has a membership of 600, of whom 400 live on an average two miles away, well scattered over the whole city, the remaining 200 being close at hand but by no means all in the parish assigned to that congregation. The parish contains some 4000 souls, of whom perhaps forty per cent. can claim no definite church connections. Even assuming that there are sufficient earnest and active Church workers to keep all the congregation at high-water mark, what is to be the policy of the minister and his office bearers with regard to his parishioners? It is easy to say what is the right and strictly correct thing to do. But Church life has a strong human

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strain in it, and any policy to be pursued must take full cognisance of the frailties and failings of sensitive beings.

The members of the congregation, whether they live in the vicinity or in the outskirts of the city, might be deeply concerned in the evangelising of the parish allotted to them and ought individually and collectively to put forth every effort in this direction. But, alas, the average member is more deeply concerned with his own spiritual welfare, and demands the constant and exacting attention of the minister and those who labour with him. The energies of most congregations are meantime dissipated in humouring the touchy self-esteem of their members, and too often it is the least satisfactory of them who call for most time and consideration.

It is to be regretted that the present temper of the Christian congregation is in no sense missionary and if it should make any pretence to be so it feels its duty is fully and faithfully discharged when it sends a liberal contribution to the cause of foreign missions. The day is past when the Church can count upon its elders to devote themselves to the actual work of influencing those within the parish to bestir themselves out of their religious lethargy and become active church members. Meanwhile the parish is patently neglected or suffers the occasional attention of a door-to-door survey which ends where it ought to begin.

What is the solution ? Some advise an increase of staff in particularly difficult areas. If by this is meant the provision of missionary assistants and parish sisters, then it is a palliative but no solution which is suggested. It is perfectly well recognised that

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the visit of assistant or sister is not the same as that of the minister, and will not relieve the dissatisfaction which the minister's absence is sure to create. Much, of course, can be done by these agents. The burden of many of the congregational organisations can be lightened for the minister by their services. The preliminary door-to-door surveys can well be left to them, provided careful notes are taken of the results and these are carefully followed up at regular periods by the minister. In these circumstances the time and vitality of the minister should not be expended in visiting those who are regular members of other churches though resident in the parish, or who do not require his special services. The usefulness of a missionary assistant is very much lessened by the constant changes that take place in personnel. In this respect the services of a parish sister are so much the more to be esteemed, but her work is more specialised and has effect only within a circumscribed area.

Since the war years the status of a missionary assistant has suffered grave deterioration owing to the lack of probationers and the consequent employment of students. The use of student missionaries is a vicious practice, being neither fair to the work of the Church nor to the student himself. The suggestion that their employment should be prohibited calls forth protests from two quarters. Many of our city ministers protest that their withdrawal will force them to dispense altogether with the services of a missionary, as their congregational finances will not stretch to the larger salary required for a probationer. Moreover the congregations where the services of a missionary are

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most needed are those where the financial struggle is greatest. The difficulty is not insuperable. Large grants might in certain cases be given by the committees and trusts concerned, while in other cases a more reasonable distribution of financial resources should be able to meet the situation.

There is the further protest from the section of ministers who are mindful of the difficulties with which their parents and they themselves fought during the years at the university and the divinity halls. They plead for a continuance of the practice of employing students as a means of livelihood for those who could not otherwise meet the expense of their training. The Church has always claimed that its doors were open wide for the poor man's son as well as for the heir to an inheritance. Too much can be made of this point of view. Before ever it was thought fit to employ students for church work during their course very many of our ministers came from homes of indigence. But the sturdy independence of the Scot is now scarcely more than an historical fact. No one seems nowadays to contemplate a struggle for the sake of the lad o' pairts. The demand is constantly for maintenance beyond bare existence at the hands of the Church, with no anxiety and little exertion on the part of the recipient. We are growing nearer and nearer the stage when the Church will require to adopt its students from the moment they enter the divinity course, support them, and supervise their work, employing them only during the vacation, but at the same time exercising over them a strict and yet sympathetic control which ought to extend beyond the period of their probation.

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Meanwhile the parochial problem remains unsolved, and delay in its solution is at the present juncture of the Church's history nothing short of a calamity. There is evidence for those who labour in the Church that the tide is rising, and the spiritual awakening of the people of our land is a reality not to be ignored. The response which the active ministry in the city is receiving is unmistakable. The interest of so many of our younger ministers in home mission work, and their consecrated resolve to serve the Church no other where than in a crowded area, go to demonstrate the fact.

One cannot help feeling that the whole method of dealing with the depressed areas of Glasgow calls for reconsideration. The Presbyterian system so long rigidly adhered to has passed the zenith of its power and effectiveness. It is pleasing to pat ourselves on the back as good staunch Presbyterians and be prepared at all times to stand for the preservation of the old landmarks. But the work of the Church of Christ is a greater thing than Presbyterianism or any other ism, and if it cannot be carried out effectively under one or other, then we should not be afraid to scrap it. Yet that does not seem necessary if we dare to interpret Presbyterianism with the elasticity of, say, John Knox. Attempts have already been made to set up in the Hutchesontown area of Glasgow a home mission centre organised to meet the peculiar needs of the population and unhampered by the restraints common to Presbyterian Church government. These failed through the extreme conservatism of the constitutionalist and the alarm of others who dreaded a competition they could not meet. Try

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as one may to suggest new methods for the freer exercise of the Christian ministry, and it will not be found that the hindrances are in any way connected with the promotion of Christ's kingdom but rather the rights of ministers, the rights of Kirk Sessions and the constitutional rights of individual church members. Surely there are no rights in the Master's service which ought to be allowed to stand in the way of His work.

The idea behind the new proposal was to recognise, first of all, that the corporate body, which it was hoped would be formed out of the souls recovered from churchlessness, could never by any possibility govern itself on the constitutional lines of our present form of Presbyterianism. No sooner would these people be brought under the influence of the Church than they would rise above their environment and leave the parish for other areas. And this was to be an exclusively parochial institution. It would scarcely be a congregation, and yet it would be something more than a mission. It was proposed to staff it almost to excess with a group of clergy fully ordained and of equal status, and a number of church sisters. Equal status, of course, in so far as they would be regularly ordained ministers of the Church of Scotland, yet with one head to give unity and focus to the work. The experiment was called for. It still is, not only in Glasgow but also elsewhere. And the Church should still have the courage to make it. We must have our great National Church ready to take risks for Christ's sake, ready to fail even, if only it will be bold enough to experiment.

That something like a new phase of Presby-

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terianism, with less emphasis on ecclesiastical parity and less insistence on the present forms of constitutional government, is coming is easy to foretell. May it come sooner than later, but let this hope and prayer be not misinterpreted as a call for any other form alien to our Scottish character and temper. We need aye no other Church, but we would go as the Spirit leads us, gladly and triumphantly. The wonder is that so few of our good Presbyterians realise how much our congregations have suffered by being so eminently congregational. Yet another attempt was made—this time in the interest of the young life of Glasgow—by advocating the federation of youth organisations connected with neighbouring churches. In this attempt it was realised that there are many organisations such as boys' brigades, girls' guildry, scouts, bands of hope, &c., which are so weak as to be little more than a name. There are also many Sunday schools with large rolls supplying congregations with excellent material for training and developing, but deplorably weak because of a deficiency in men and women really qualified to teach. Great gain would follow if many of these organisations could be amalgamated or federated and officered and directed by selected men and women from the several interested congregations. But again the attempt was crushed on the ground that each congregation looks to these struggling organisations as feeders for its membership. Loyalty to a particular congregation must be preserved at all costs, although no one would claim surely that membership with a particular congregation is a *sine qua non* of salvation. Here again if the Church would but

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make the experiment it would see that the finest types of loyalty would not be interfered with, and the congregations individually and collectively would stand to benefit in the long run.

So far as we have gone it is apparent that the congregations we have had in mind are those whose glory is now more or less departed and who are fighting a desperate battle in most difficult and trying circumstances. Although by no means all the aspects of their work have been under review, enough has been said to suggest the brooding anxiety which lies like mist in the valleys over all their labours. Too much honour cannot be paid to our down town ministers whose devotion and zeal in the work to their hands have not been surpassed by any of the servants of the Church in any age. Many of them have succeeded beyond the expectations of the most optimistic, and where this is so it has been owing entirely to the personality of the minister. That their recognition is so slight is due to the false judgment of the world and to the lack of a voice on the part of those who are influenced and helped by their minister. But their work is an evidence of rich Christian spirit seeking no reward beyond the satisfaction that the work entrusted to them has not been in vain. The degrees of universities are seldom theirs, but ministers do not live by degrees but by the spirit within them.

We have left for consideration that part of the Church's problem in Glasgow which carries with it less promise of any solution, the problem of the prosperous but irreligious West-ender. Though he may live in the south-side or north-east, the designation West-ender will not be misunderstood.

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The seriousness of his case is due to his colossal ignorance. He probably knows his car inside out ; not a play comes to the theatre but he has seen it and can analyse its motive in a most refreshing manner ; he reads from the *Times* and discourses gracefully on the Book Society's monthly recommendation ; but he is ignorant of the nature of his own make-up and is cheaply scornful of the means of grace. Like the East-ender, the West-ender who is keen on the Church and alive to its purpose and message is of inestimable value to any congregation. He is worthy to be cultivated in the best sense of this word. But it is folly to shut one's eyes to the fact of a large amount of non-church-going amongst those whose circumstances can never be cited as hindrances for Church attendance. The people for whom the Church cannot fail to have concern are actually choked with the riches of their world. They are the least approachable because of their pride and self-esteem. Protestantism with its claim of private judgment has proved a snare and a delusion to this class of the community. Their ignorance cannot allow them to differentiate between liberty and licence, and it may startle them to be made to realise that what is really needed in their case is education and discipline.

That there are some stirrings of conscience among them is evidenced by the paltry excuses given for their neglect of public worship in the interests of pure recreation. Why should any man tell us that he must golf or motor on Sunday as it is the only day when he is free to do so, while it is only too patent to all that the Sunday golfer is also the man who is perpetually on the greens throughout

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the week ? He could lay claim to some degree of honesty if he were franker and less protesting. He might even touch an agreeable point if he stated openly that recreation was in itself no evil and could not be prohibited by any of the Christian commandments. The truth is, this man dare not argue on a high level nor can he lay claim to any high ideals. His soul is in darkness, selfish and arrogant and carrying off his heathendom on the wings of a prosperous independence.

Unfortunately the Church is here face to face with the problem of youth at its worst, demanding a new point of view from what in reality is nothing more than a recurrence of the licence of earlier days. Nothing of an organised nature seems likely to influence this type of blatant irreligion. Nothing short of a rebirth, a stirring of the Spirit of God throughout the land and the presentation of a liberal religion which shall bring home to such the necessity for placing first things first and for securing before all else the welfare of their immortal souls.

There will always be pity for the east-end minister whether he needs it or not, but there is never any for the west-end minister who, with all the advantages, has the agony of labouring to produce a spiritual atmosphere where there is more materialism and less soul than in the poor man's parish. The method of approach is hard indeed to find. Will door-to-door visiting be welcome or in any degree effective ? If it were so, during what hours of day or night could it be usefully done ? The salvation of the west end is probably to be found in that part of it which is deeply and eagerly religious. For with all this somewhat severe

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criticism there must be recognition of elements in the social environment of Glasgow's wealth which are definitely making for righteousness. There is much hope in the section of young men who have earned a place of distinction in sport and are ready to give their services for the spiritual and moral development of the youth of the suburbs. Much would be gained if the Church could organise this wholesome influence and make it a distinct and obvious part of congregational life. This leaven should not be so hidden in the lump of society as to make it a separate factor, working for righteousness no doubt, yet at the same time fostering a spirit of opposition to and rebellion from the Church.

There is no suggestion of sarcasm in the proposition that it is quite within the bounds of possibility that the real salvation of the west end of Glasgow is to be found in the east end. The young life of the nation, whose education is all along the line which is meant to produce leaders, is concentrating on the need for social betterment. The gospel which seems most attractive to them is a gospel of social and political purity, with Christ as the outstanding social reformer of the world whose message has unfortunately been perverted into a doctrinal religion. If that be true then the Church must begin from this plane and stimulate what is permanent in that outlook, giving it its proper focus, and calling upon the new generation to bring it to practical expression in their concern for the depressed areas of the city. Once the Church has got the east end and the west end to meet and to work for a common end, perchance the spiritual content of the east will shine like the sun into the hearts of the west and recreate in Glasgow a new heaven and a new earth.

CHAPTER V

FOR CHRIST OR CONGREGATION

THE COMMUNION ROLL

IN the year 1705 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland caused a series of "Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of Proceeding in the Ecclesiastical Judicatories of the Church of Scotland" to be printed and transmitted to the several presbyteries. The edition issued that year pointed out that they could not be recognised as forming a deed of the Church but might be very useful for advice and direction, though not as a binding rule. In the section dealing with "Admission to the Lord's Table, and debarring from it," the last clause states "It were fit when any one removeth from one parish to another, that their testimonials bear account whether they have partaken of the Lord's Supper; and if it were fit for this, that there were a record kept of those who are admitted to the Lord's Supper." This is the first distinct suggestion of anything in the nature of a communion roll which I have been able to find among the Acts of Assembly, and one can safely presume from the framing of the clause that it was put forward as a tentative suggestion which it was left to the discretion of Kirk Sessions to accept or not as they chose. The value of the roll is evidently

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anticipated as being of a practical nature, and it gradually became universal.

It was not till 1835 that the General Assembly decreed the making up annually of a roll of communicants in every parish. Even after that, difficulty was experienced in getting the rolls kept up to date, for in 1862 an Act was passed by which every Kirk Session was required to make up annually a duly purged roll of communicants, and presbyteries were enjoined to see that this was regularly done.

The significance of the Roll as we have it to-day is clearly a growth which time has nurtured and the distorted sense of man has created. This generation requires to have it explained to them that it was the custom of the Church of Scotland to give out small tokens (generally cast in lead) to the intending communicants, who gave them up to the elders when they came forward to the Table at the Sacrament. Communion cards bearing names and addresses are modern innovations, necessary no doubt in present-day circumstances, but utterly unthinkable when the congregations were so small or, at least, the number of communicants was so limited that everyone was readily known not only to the minister and his elders but also to everyone else in the neighbourhood. With the growing population of this age much is to be said for a strict note being kept of all who continue in the regular fellowship of the Church. It is quite in line with the mechanical features of modern life that such a piece of machinery should be beloved of even the Church. It ensures accuracy, a careful registration of the temperature of our congregations, and forms

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a basis, at any rate, upon which the privileges of Church membership can be reserved to those who apparently deserve them.

I suppose one ought to accept the wisdom of the last two hundred years as adequate support in defence of the communion roll as we find it now. And yet the succeeding years as well as those which preceded, may reveal quite as much sound judgment in deciding to dispense with a system which is not all to the good and may well be found to be suffering from decadent old age. To have his or her name on the communion roll of a particular congregation is regarded by a very large number of our people as a *sine qua non* of Christianity. Many of them stretch a point in their indifference and exert themselves at very infrequent intervals to put in an attendance at communion for no other reason than to have their names retained on the roll. It is always to be remembered that this is true only of the careless and indifferent, but their conception of this necessity is a cause of stumbling to them and not entirely confined to them, and it is difficult to see how it can be removed without the wholesale condemnation of the roll itself. The ideal is to inculcate in the minds of our Church members that their partaking of the Lord's Supper is a recognition of the need of their souls for the Saviour Christ, and that thereby they share in the fellowship of His Catholic Church and are witnesses before men of their faith in His redeeming love. Any mechanical system which interferes with that is destructive of the holy purpose of His Church and ought as speedily as possible to be dispensed with.

This is surely an illustration of the over-organ-

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isation of the Church. One of its evil effects is to stimulate the curse of pure congregationalism. The transfer system, consequent on the keeping of communion rolls and for which they were originally suggested, has never adequately worked. The failure was inherent in the system. Church members felt that once their name was on the roll of a congregation, they did not belong to any other, and their sense of Christian fellowship practically began and ended within the book carefully kept by the Session. Not a few of our ministers persist in intimating that classes will be held for those who desire to join the Church or to become members of the Church, forgetting or ignoring the fact that every baptised person is a member of the Church. When the mistake—for it is a grave mistake—is pointed out to them they justify themselves by saying that everyone knows what is meant. But the real meaning is hidden.

The trouble is that many people mean nothing more than that they are members of a particular congregation, and their conception of the fellowship of the Church is the social companionship of those who worship with them within a certain building and under the ministrations of the clergyman whom their votes have elected to be their pastor. Why should it be necessary for individual communicants to take with them certificates of good standing when they desire to share in the Christian fellowship here or there or elsewhere? Is it to prevent the intrusion at the Table of anyone who has come under the censure of the Church or whose life is not befitting the profession that communion implies? Then this is but a relic of the old practice of fencing the

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tables, which experience has fortunately condemned as unchristian. This practice goes much further back than the introduction of the communion roll. Yet in 1837 a schoolmaster having repeatedly persisted in sitting at a communion table after being refused a token by the Kirk Session, the Assembly instructed the presbytery to proceed against the schoolmaster according to the rules of the Church. Our grievance is that this limitation of the sacrament is allowed to continue and is in no small measure emphasised by the persistence of the communion roll.

If the Church were prepared to present to the people a true doctrine of the Church, and to follow to its logical conclusion the Protestant position, the coming to or abstaining from the Sacrament could safely be left to the individual conscience. It ought to be made abundantly clear that a Church member in Wick is also a Church member in Wigtown, and that the estimate of his value to the Church, as well as his religious content, can never be judged by the number of times he is present at communion in any one particular building.

There is need for teaching in this matter of Church membership. The congregationalism of the day is having effect in a number of ways all detrimental to a true understanding of Christian discipleship. The desire to conserve the parochial system of the Church cannot be too strongly commended, nor has there been any time in the history of the Church more opportune for emphasising its value. When in 1809 the General Assembly declared their high disapprobation of an arrangement whereby a presentee might accede to

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the request of parishioners that he should declare in writing his consent to their receiving sealing ordinances from any other minister of the Church, as they had not freedom to receive them from him, there may have been circumstances to justify the disapprobation. It is difficult, however, to see how any such arrangement could militate against the spiritual good of the people, which must surely at all times come before the maintenance of a constitutional position.

Those who are so anxious about the organisation of our congregations need not be unduly perturbed at the suggestion that the Church of Christ would stand to gain by the disappearance of the communion roll. In place of it, Kirk Sessions might with advantage compile a register of the congregation. Perhaps one ought to make this suggestion to the modern body known as the Congregational Board, the advent of which is an index of the importance which is being given to the material side of congregational life at the expense of its spiritual values.

It is of interest in this connection to notice that in the series of Overtures referred to above as printed in 1705, it was suggested "Use would be made of the roll of the parish, not only for examination, but also for considering the several conditions and dispositions of the people, that accordingly they may be admonished, and particularly prayed for by the ministers in secret." It was laid down for the election and constituting of elders and deacons that the "election is to be managed by the Presbytery, by a list given in to them, made up by the heads of families." When the Church settles down to its work in a systematic way and the value of the

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delimitation of areas is realised, the parishes assigned to the individual congregations should not be too large for a return to this more excellent suggestion of a roll of the parish and what was presumably a register of the families. It is not impossible to devise means of securing an accurate knowledge and record of those who constitute the care of the Church without the abhorrent abuse of the Sacrament of our Lord as an instrument in the Church's organisation.

The method of keeping this communion roll with any degree of accuracy leads to another hindrance to the advancement of Christ's kingdom in our land. In 1896 the General Assembly enacted that "persons found to have been absent from communion for three consecutive years without a sufficient reason known to the Kirk Session shall be deemed not to be communicants, and their names shall be removed from the roll." Assuming some value in the roll, it cannot possibly be maintained that such a time limit errs on the side of severity. Every Session, in loyalty to the Church, and in what often seems sheer self-defence, meets once a year to revise the roll. Not without much misgiving, nor without the generous exercise of reasonable mercy, one by one the names of delinquents are considered, and often the slenderest form of reason is accepted before the decree goes forth that the name shall be struck off the roll. Kirk Sessions have no option ; they are law-abiding courts of the Church loyally obeying the enactments of the Supreme Court. But have they ever considered to what result their duty leads ? They are deliberately dividing the sheep from the goats, and are

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assigning the goats to a place outside the privileges of the Church. Agreed that those who wilfully refuse to share the responsibility and spurn the benefits of the Church are not entitled to any of its privileges. But that does not clear the conscience of the Church. In this act there is something more than a mechanical process in operation. It is more than the mere registration of an act after the event. It has in it something of the nature of excommunication.

When the Scottish Churches' Council issued its Survey in 1927, it revealed the fact that over a million adults were non-church-going. The statement, which could not be refuted, was startling and depressing in the extreme. Most ministers and as many elders frankly questioned the figures. In their experience they met very few who did not claim some sort of Church connection. It was shown at that time that for the decade 1917-1927, 166,199 communicants had their names taken off the rolls of the Church of Scotland. If this number is doubled to represent those similarly removed by all other Churches in Scotland, we have over 300,000 or one-third of the total non-church-going population of Scotland accounted for in ten years. A generation would make up the total calculated by the Scottish Churches' Council in their report. The fact is illuminating. It would seem as if the Church were giving its countenance to a wrongful conception of its own place in the life of the nation, and a false analysis of its own influence. Making every allowance for the deceitfulness of statistics, the Church may reasonably claim that practically all the people of Scotland have been in living touch with, and under the direct influence of, one of the

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Christian Churches at one time or another. The census does not reveal paganism or an anti-church spirit, but it does point to a deadly weakness in the Church's efficiency.

The Church can win, but its grip is too weak. It can make manifest the redemptive love of Christ, but it seems to fail in inculcating and fostering the enduring spirit of worship and service. By this process of purging the roll, is the Church not doubling its work and needlessly creating a false barrier? If the roll be required then the act of purging is necessary. But what happens to those persons whose names are struck off the roll? Does it not mean that in many cases the Church agrees to ignore their existence? Yet these are the people whose spiritual life ought to be the special care of the Church. To all outward appearance they are the lost. Left to themselves, the number who seek restoration to the privileges of the Church is extremely small and in this argument can be disregarded. But the Church dare not continue to neglect them. Those who recognised them once as of their especial fellowship, and have lost them, ought to take particular care to seek them out again. I would suggest that every Kirk Session keep a second roll bearing the names which by Act of Assembly have been removed from the communion roll. These names should never be lost sight of. The elders who visit their districts should carry with them always their list of persons within their areas whose names appear in the second roll. It were well if the Church never quite forgot those who once were, and may once again be, of the faithful who sit at the Table of the Lord.

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A parish roll and a congregational roll would meet all the requirements of the most exact ecclesiastic. The one would ensure the correct conception of the Church's duty to the entire nation, and the other the due administration of the work of a congregation. The spiritual strength of the Church cannot be judged by the gathering of statistics of those whose names are on our communion rolls or of those who communicate at least once a year.

CHAPTER VI

MAN TO MAN, THE PERSONAL TOUCH

PAROCHIAL VISITATION

I HAD on the spur of the moment entitled this chapter "Door to Door Visitation," and in so doing had fallen into the error which I would seek above all things to avoid. Door to door suggests almost everything that visitation should not be. It suggests an attitude utterly alien to the pastoral sense which ought to prompt and follow all visiting. It deals with houses and not with human souls. It implies a monotony and the reduction to a common factor which should be as far removed from the mind of the visitor as anything can be. Parochial visitation is the Church in its pastoral action. It must be regarded as a continuation of the ministry of Him who came to seek and to save ; to Him who *went about* doing good.

In country parishes the minister will not hesitate to regard it as his duty to call at every house without any discrimination whatsoever. He will find welcome at all, for in Scotland it is a priceless heritage from the past that the minister of the parish is the servant of everyone within its bounds and has access in the name of Christ to every home. Whatever be done in future years, the minister who fails in this duty in his first year will never recover his

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lost opportunity. From a very human motive he will find it advantageous to gain thus early the reputation at least of being a minister who visits and is ready to be friendly with one and all.

There is necessity laid upon all ministers to realise that, in respect of visiting, the difference between a town and a country parish does not assume any degree of greatness. In the one as in the other effective work will be done only if it be systematic and thorough. All necessary details of the families should be carefully noted, and the revelations of one house should never be allowed to overflow into another. In the language of bluntness, the minister who gossips is the curse of any parish and a disgrace to the Church.

No one should be overlooked. The halfpence in the bothies, the servants in the kitchen, and any lodgers or boarders should be sought out, and encouraged to realise that they have a place in the thoughts and prayers of the minister. It will add immensely to the value of visiting if careful and interested enquiries are made where any have sons or daughters, brothers or sisters, abroad. Once having noted the particulars the minister should never fail to ask after their welfare. Much of what is to be said hereafter applies equally well to the responsibilities of the country minister while what are kept in view are the more congested parishes in our cities and large towns.

It is inevitable that in such parishes there should be a preliminary door-to-door survey, but that must never be confused with what is meant by parochial visitation. Such a survey is not so easy as it seems, unless it is done by a group of workers who are fully

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appreciative of what they are meant to do. How should a minister proceed in this matter? If he is not careful, he will find himself saddled with the zealous but wrong type of visitor, the man or woman full of good works but devoid of good commonsense. One would like to believe that it was sound policy to get this work done by the elders exclusively. But, alas, that is far from being so. The average elder has been ordained to his high office for other purposes, and excellent as he may be by way of counsel and example he has seldom the qualities which are required for a door-to-door survey. Besides it is no condemnation of the elder to say that he has not time for this type of church work. Experience shows that the man who commands the respect of his fellows and has revealed such Christian qualities as to warrant his election to the eldership is most often one whose interests touch life on many sides and whose services are consequently in demand in other public as well as private concerns.

Among his many office-bearers or from the membership of his congregation, the minister should select one man of shrewd business capacity and always on the side of youth, to whom might be left the responsibility of gathering together men and women to act as his assistants. The number to be selected would be determined by the population of the parish, but it would be well that no one person should be expected to visit more than ten to fifteen houses. Where a large street or block of tenements is assigned to one visitor, the work tends to become a hardship to be undertaken somewhat monotonously and as quickly, and therefore, superficially as

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possible. The visitors ought to be inspired with the importance of the work and the desire to find in it interest and romance.

While a survey of each parish is of value, it would be greatly enhanced if it were done at the same time as a survey in neighbouring parishes. In our industrial towns every effort should be made to secure common action over the town so that the exact ecclesiastical condition of the town may be known. Such data are invaluable as a corrective, if nothing else, of the distorted view many of our Church workers have of what they regard as opposition to their labours. In one town on the Clyde I was informed that the greatest danger to our Church was to be found in the Roman Catholic menace, and was told that the members of that Church's adherents were rapidly approaching a majority. In investigation it was discovered that a survey of the town had been taken, and it was shown that out of a population of 13,000 adults, 6,000 were connected with Protestant places of worship ; 3,000 were Roman Catholics and 4,000 were outside any religious organisation. Here is a case where the real menace was being lost sight of for lack of accurate knowledge. Incidentally it should be said that the Protestant Church stands or falls not by its attitude towards Roman Catholicism in the land, but by its action in the interest of those who are meanwhile neither Protestant nor Roman, who, if anything, are witnesses to the failure of our Protestant Churches in the past.

Conditions due to the union of the Churches are favourable for a general adoption of such concerted action on the part of ministers and congregations.

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It was not always so, yet the need was felt so long ago as 1870. In that year Professor Charteris, to whose genius the Church owes the Woman's Guild and the Young Men's Guild, addressed the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on this work. What he tells of an experiment in Glasgow, and his reference to a regularly constituted association for this purpose, bear quotation :

“ I now lay on the table copies of the constitution of an association consisting of ten ministers and congregations, who have within the past few months divided the north-west district of Glasgow into sections, each section to be wrought by a particular congregation, all to work in harmony, and to compare notes and to be regulated by a committee. Three of those ministers are of the Church of Scotland. I am very much gratified to tell of all this here to-day. What has been done in that district of Glasgow could be done everywhere else if Christians were ‘like-minded.’ But even if others would not join us, a great reformation would be wrought on our own procedure if we would really conduct territorial missions, and keep and compare accurate statistics of them. We have been partly compelled, and partly we have chosen, to become ecclesiastical shopkeepers like others. The congregation work laid upon our ministers, where they are so popular as to fill the far too large churches in which they officiate, has completely drawn them away in many cases from attention to the poor of their parishes. Moreover the parishes are in most cases far too large ; so that no man can attend to all his theoretical duty within his parochial boundaries. In fact, so large are the churches, and so

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large the parishes, that just where it is most needed the parochial ministry is a mere name. I should expect that one of the first results of real statistics would be to make ministers content with smaller churches and smaller territories. Another result would be a great impetus given to our own missions by the revival of the idea that actual and familiar knowledge of every family and every individual in a district is absolutely indispensable to the real conduct of a mission."

The constitution of the Committee or Association to which he refers is as follows :—

I. That an Association be formed under the name of The North-West Evangelistic Association.

II. That the object of the Association be to Christianise the non-Church-going population in the North-West district of the city of Glasgow.

III. That the Association be composed of the following congregations, and such others as may hereafter be admitted : St. George's-in-the-Fields Established Church ; St. Stephen's Free Church ; New City Road United Presbyterian Church ; Garscube Road Congregational Church ; Milton Established Church ; Lyon Street Free Church ; Grant Street Reformed Presbyterian Church ; Springbank United Presbyterian Church ; Raglan Street Wesleyan Church ; Port-Dundas Established Church ; and also Grove Street (Home Mission) Institute. (St. Stephen's Established Church and Shamrock Street United Presbyterian Church have since signified their willingness to join the Association.)

IV. That the district be divided into sections, each congregation undertaking a section and carrying on the work according to its own discretion.

V. That meetings be held periodically by rotation in the several churches for hearing reports and statistics,

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for conferring as to the best method of carrying on the work, and for mutual help and encouragement therein—the minister of the church to be chairman.

VI. That the business arrangements be conducted by a committee consisting of two or more representatives appointed by each congregation, one of whom shall be the minister for the time being—the number of representatives to be fixed by a by-law.

VII. That while the Association does not contemplate any limitation of the responsibilities of individual churches, it be understood that no aggressive efforts be made by any congregation in sections undertaken by others.

VIII. That the Association recognise and respect other previously existing agencies, and act in harmony with them.

How long this Association remained in operation we cannot tell, but it says much for the zeal of the ministers who formed it that it was brought into being in spite of the feeling between the Churches in that generation. What could be attempted and carried out, even if only for a short period, then, when congregational rivalry ran high, and the territorial system was impossible in the one Church which maintained it and ignored in the others which never pretended to it, can surely be tried out in these days. If congregations are still in many cases too large, the parochial areas assigned to them are not beyond adequate pastoral care.

Now, for parochial visitation, the methods adopted to secure that all necessary details are noted regarding the various homes visited are numerous and varied. The more methodical of workers pride themselves in the possession of cards or forms duly

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tabulated, so that only the minimum of trouble is required to fill them up. Much is to be said for this, only if they never leave the hand of the visitor. They ought never to be left at the house to be filled up and returned on a second visit. The very people the Church is desirous of getting into touch with will resent such an impersonal form of approach and set aside the request as an impertinent interference. The visitors should have in their possession cards or books with tables carefully noting the particular information required. The simpler the better. The initial survey should be undertaken for the sole purpose of finding out those with no Church connection. In Appendix II appears a synopsis of the returns given in the case of nine streets in one of our large cities. The list of religious bodies would in itself seem to argue the necessity for still further Church union in Scotland, yet it has to be noted, that in spite of the disunion which is said so often to be hurtful to the religious life of the nation, only 173 families out of 843 are not definitely connected with some Church and only 52 are known to be outside the Church. The synopsis is of use also in its corrective qualities in an area where the Roman Catholic population presents an appearance of strength, because of its unity, out of all proportion to its numbers. It would probably be a revelation to many of the people living in that area to know that the Protestant population outnumbered the Roman by three to one. The Protestant population in our towns and cities dissipates itself over innumerable congregations and worshipping groups, and is very often unable to realise its own strength.

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Still, taking this concrete example of a door-to-door survey, it can be shown that the problem presented to the minister and congregation of the parish is one of manageable proportions. This is, of course, not a parish but only a section of one, but it represents a population of round about 3,000 and cannot be far short of the average size of parish as it now exists following the delimitation of areas. There are now 173 families to be looked after. In the chapter on Glasgow it is shown how impossible it must often be for the minister to give the intensive interest which these families require without adequate assistance. He must ultimately by some means or other get into immediate touch with such of those outsiders as show possibilities. But the preliminary work might well be left to a body of workers at once tactful and free from any of the crankiness from which all organisations, and the Church in particular, woefully suffer. Their labours should never be allotted to them by streets or stairs. Each worker should be given a group of not more than five or six families, no one of which lives beside the other. As far as possible the groups should be made up of types of families with which the particular worker is most likely to be congenial. These families should be visited constantly in the very friendliest way, until such sympathy is created as will make the example of the visitor the best argument for their Church attachment. Persuasion is wrongly used if it is to be made to precede personal friendship. There will probably be many instances where real personal contact cannot be created, where the visitor in his or her friendliest methods can only get so far into the confidence of the home.

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Where this happens a change of visitor should be made.

The failure common to much of our parochial visitation lies in the idea that results should show themselves rapidly. There is nothing further from experience. The Gospel narrative seems to carry in it lines between lines showing that the love of the Master met with slow response and disappointing results until after Calvary ; until the collective influence of His ministry produced the thousands who were added to the Church in Jerusalem. In all this work what is being attempted is to change the whole atmosphere of living to which these families have probably for long been accustomed, to rouse them out of a thoughtless inertia, and to break down the wall of partition which pride and social jealousy have built up. For the success of this work it has been pointed out that tact and commonsense are essential. Too much emphasis cannot be laid on this point. It is true that the visitor acts as a representative of the Church and is indeed a messenger of Jesus Christ. For that reason it is all the more to be desired that manner and countenance should not be marked by solemnity, but by a sure and joyous vitality which is never aggressive while always attractive. The Church organiser has scope here for his ambitious schemes. There is scarcely a term available with which to designate a set of such parochial visitors which has not already been appropriated by the numerous religious organisations. But such a set of visitors could be organised in every industrial parish, and their work would be not only service to the Church but of great value to their own spiritual advancement.

CHAPTER VII

CHRIST LOST IN THE SLUMS

SLUMS

THERE are times when the disturbing elements of present-day life force the conclusion that this generation will take its place, in the history of the nation, solely as one which had little to commend it save its endurance of the Great War with its impoverishing effects. Fortunately there are other, saner times, when the age already reveals to the observer a greatness in political and social action which will mark it as outstanding. In spite of all that we suffer in contrast to pre-war conditions, this is eminently true in the matter of housing.

The conscience of the nation is awakened to the need of improvement in the conditions in which people live, and remarkable figures are available to show that the hand is answering the heart as rapidly as resources will allow. The upheaval of the war left housing in the country in a condition which, if continued, would have tended to destroy family life. Owing to grave shortage of houses young people were forced to begin their married life in the homes of their parents. There was scarcely a grade in the social scale which was unaffected by the position. The Government, supported by public opinion and in response to urgent public

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demand, took up the matter, and offered State grants to assist in the building of houses to meet the shortage. In Scotland by this means 143,825 houses have been completed during the period between 1919 and 1932, while to this total must be added 15,718 working-class houses provided without State subsidy. The total output of houses in that period was 158,543. In recent years the number of houses in course of erection or completed has steadily increased. There are several grievances aired from time to time in connection with these houses, such as the fixing of an uneconomic rent at the expense of the community to the benefit of individuals whose circumstances do not warrant special consideration. With such matters we are not here concerned ; but the grievance that the nation is expending its means for the adequate housing of the comfortable and comparatively well-to-do to the neglect of the miserably poor and needy calls for our immediate attention.

I do not think it can be questioned that the state of the national conscience, which to-day demands that the slums of our towns and cities shall be abolished, is due to the Christian spirit of the nation, and is an expression once more of the Churches' triumph in the name of Christ.

There was no doubt the hope that the building of better type houses for the prosperous working man and his family would, in time, mean a gradual raising of the level of houses for all in grades of social life beneath him. This hope has not been realised, mainly for two reasons. The needs of the prosperous working men were too great to allow of a gradual moving up into better houses, and it

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is to be feared that many in higher grades of society, feeling the economic pressure, took every opportunity to leave their larger and more expensive houses and move into the smaller, now more in keeping with their depleted financial circumstances.

The time came when the lowest grade of housing demanded attention. The 1923 Act provided a fifty per cent. Slum Clearance Grant, and in 1930 a Scottish Housing Act was passed for the rehousing of persons living in uninhabitable houses. Tribute must be paid to the municipal authorities for their desire to take up this matter, and for their concern for the well-being of the more necessitous of their citizens. But the enlightened Christian spirit frets at delay and at any willingness to be satisfied with anything approaching the minimum. Already in 1923, 15,349 houses were included in slum clearance schemes, yet, large as the number seems, it represents only a fraction of what remains to be done. What are the chances that the problem of housing in better circumstances all our slum dwellers will be solved before the conscience of the nation falls asleep in this matter? The Department of Health for Scotland states that "the annual normal needs are represented by (a) houses required to replace houses which, gradually, through the efflux of time, became uninhabitable; and (b) houses required to meet the increase in the number of families or persons requiring separate housing accommodation."

The mind of the department is curiously static in its attitude to the problem, for in their calculation of normal needs they do not take into consideration the constantly rising level of well-being and the

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ever increasing demands of the people for better conditions. For example, many of the houses to-day are quite inadequate for the class of people who inhabited them a generation or two ago, not because of any structural or amenity defect discoverable in them, but because they do not provide the accommodation suited to modern ideas of living. And, as we shall see later, it is certain that the accommodation regarded as adequate to-day is not really such as any but financial considerations would declare suitable. The truth is, the slum clearance proposed to-day is good as far as it goes and may be as much as the resources of the nation can overtake, but, when it is completed, there will still be slums, and conditions of living little removed from what presently exist in so far as they make for degraded lives.

Statistics are unavoidable in this chapter, but these shall be restrained as far as possible. It is estimated that an average of 5,000 houses are required annually to replace unfit houses in Scotland. The Department of Health safeguard themselves by stating that this is a "meantime" calculation. They further calculate that 1,100 houses per annum are required within the next ten years to meet the normal growth and movement of population. The population of Scotland between 1921 and 1931 actually declined, but the movement of the population must always be regarded as a factor in any such calculation, and it is this factor which accounts for the stated increase of houses. The grand total of houses required annually on an average is, therefore, 6,100, on the assumption that there is no present shortage. But at the end of 1930 the shortage

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was not less than 63,500, and was possibly somewhat more. It is necessary that Church people should realise that house shortage produces slum conditions, and that, if all the present slum buildings were razed to the ground, there would still be slums. The Department of Health has issued a programme of slum replacement to cover the next five years, but it will require all the intelligence and zeal of the Christian community to support the municipal authorities in carrying it out. The matter cannot be discussed with reference to national needs, as the different areas have their different problems and standards.

I am indebted to the articles on "Slums" written by Mr Philip H. Massey for the *Architects' Journal* for much of what follows on the conditions in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee. The centre of Glasgow, he tells us, quite definitely demands the clearance of square miles rather than acres. What standard would you as a householder be disposed to accept upon which you would estimate adequate or inadequate accommodation? Mr Massey determines on a standard of one and a half individuals to one room. That is to say a family of four require a house of three rooms, adequate if the children be of one sex, but, if of opposite sex, no room, it is presumed, would be empty at night. It would be worth your while to visualise how this standard would work out in families of differing numbers. It will be freely conceded that the one-room house is not to be commended even for one person. The figures given for Glasgow must be allowed to speak for themselves. In 1931, 42.3 per cent. of the population were living over two per room.

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115,490 people live in one-roomed houses.

467,725 people live in two-roomed houses.

In Glasgow the standard of over-crowding is over three to a room and on this standard it is calculated that 200,000 people are overcrowded. Mr H. V. Morton has described Glasgow as the worst slum city in Great Britain, but it must be borne in mind that the Corporation are regarded as uncommonly active in the matter of slum clearance.

In Edinburgh 27.9 per cent. of the population were living, in 1931, over two per room.

20,144 people live in one-roomed houses.

134,787 people live in two-roomed houses.

On the standard of overcrowding of over two to a room there are said to be in Edinburgh 116,734 living in overcrowded conditions. If the standard of over three to a room be taken, there are 43,893 persons in conditions that are dangerous to health and moral well-being.

In Dundee 35.2 per cent. of the population were living, in 1931, over two per room.

81,824 people live in two-roomed houses.

14,588 people live in one-roomed houses.

60,288 persons were in 1931 living in overcrowded conditions where the standard is taken of over two to a room.

22,438 persons were living over three per room.

The *Architects' Journal* concludes that for Glasgow to abate overcrowding at over two per room, and to replace insanitary dwellings, 55,000 houses

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are required ; for Edinburgh 13,000 houses are required, and for Dundee 12,000 houses are required.

Towards meeting these requirements the five years housing plan for Glasgow provides for 15,500 houses at the rate of 3,100 a year. Dundee proposes to provide 500 slum clearance houses a year for the next five years and 500 additional houses to abate overcrowding and provide for those about to be married. Edinburgh's housing plan is for the provision of 750 houses a year under slum clearance schemes, and the erection of other 750 houses by private enterprise, failing which the Corporation may build them.

The figures given for the three largest cities of Scotland indicate how great is the problem in each of the cities, and all whose observations extend to the conditions in our other cities and towns will realise that the nation has a large task before it.

Nor must we confine our attention to housing conditions in our crowded areas. In the country areas much needs the acute attention of all who desire the welfare of our fellow countrymen. Indeed while our large municipalities are tackling their respective problems with a desire to do the best possible to overtake their enormous tasks, it is melancholy reading in the *Report of the Department of Health for Scotland* (1932) that it was found necessary to make an order, declaring the local authority of Perth County to be in default, in respect to the provision of houses at Blair Atholl, and directing them to exercise their powers with regard to the defective houses.

Now, lying behind this enquiry and the statement

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of housing needs, is the misery and suffering of men, women and children, whose lack of response to the call of the Church has often been the despair of ministers and church workers who have expended themselves without stint in the cause of Christ. But is it any wonder that the results should be so paltry? Is it reasonable to expect that our fellow citizens, who have been victims of most appalling conditions in a Christian land, should be possessed of a strong faith in a Gospel which has the appearance of being all words and no action? The amazing fact is the patient submission of these people in the past. In the heart of conditions which are almost impossible to imagine, there are to be found homes obviously radiant with the spirit of Christ, where the souls of men and women have risen above the physical discomforts of their surroundings and have been able to cling to a consolation which is divine. Many of our Church people, aware of the conditions in which our less fortunate fellow citizens have had to live, have excused their indifference and neglect by stating that slums are created not so much by overcrowding or defective buildings as by the habits of the people themselves. The experience of cities such as Edinburgh and Glasgow, where slum clearance schemes have been set up, refutes this cruel lie. It has been found that at least 75 per cent. of the people taken from the slums to new houses have risen to their new opportunities. The percentage is deliberately set low, but those in close touch with the schemes set the figures as high as 85 per cent. and over. The Medical Officer for Glasgow reports that the standard of cleanliness, etc., in the rehousing

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schemes was satisfactory ; indeed, in many of the schemes, this was extremely high.

No doubt the continuance of slums has had an economic side. Many proprietors were unable, as well as unwilling, to do anything to better the houses from which they drew rents. Yet how did they salve their consciences ? Were they members of a Christian Church ? And how, in not a few cases, could they have any happiness in using these rents towards meeting the luxuries of their own homes, while their tenants were deprived of any pretence of comfort or decency ? Our wonder remains in spite of our understanding many of the difficulties, financial and otherwise, which are associated with the possession of this type of property. No countenance can ever be given to the excuse of ignorance as to the real conditions on the part of those proprietors who claim that the management of their houses is left to their factors. Ignorance, in such connection, cannot be offered as a plea of not guilty before the judgment of the Christian conscience, any more than it can be accepted in a court of law.

If overcrowding were the sole condition pertaining to our slums, there might be less cause for agitation. But the evil is greatly accentuated by the fact that it exists chiefly in squalid and badly planned areas, where decaying, insanitary, and vermin-infested houses cling together for support. It is well known that the rate of mortality in these areas is high, and yet, perhaps because they are somewhat hardened to their life-long experiences, it is surprising how many children grow up to maturity and become physically, as well as socially, the "toughs" of the

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town. One dare not enlarge on the details of such conditions, nor is this short chapter the occasion for dealing with them. Neither the physical nor the educational conditions of slum dwellers can ever be considered as outside the concern of the Christian Church. These cannot be separated from moral and spiritual conditions. But of these latter we must write.

What measure of decency can be expected of the growing generations of both sexes whose circumstances do not permit of some degree of separation at night? Imagine the effect morally on young people whose lives are lived in houses of one room, where every purpose must be served and every incident of life must be revealed. Where privacy is utterly unknown, where there is scarcely standing room in the home, it is inevitable that the street and the public house should be preferred; and it is also inevitable that quarrels and disturbances should take place even between members of the same family. In view of the conditions in which so many of our fellow men live, it rouses indignation to hear the resentful objections that are made to the crowds of exuberant young men and women who seek, in their own ways, sometimes very coarse no doubt, to get some enjoyment in our streets at the expense of the dignified peace of those more fortunately circumstanced. Is it any wonder that bitterness and a revolutionary spirit find happy hunting ground in our slum areas? It is greatly to the credit of the rising generation, that they resent the civilisation which allowed the slum problem to become so acute, and which is still reluctant to pay for the remedy. It is well for us to realise that

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the gangster feature, brought so prominently to public notice in Glasgow in recent years, is the real expression of the fact that there is a soul in these slum communities. There is a comradeship and communal sense which is not all savage. There is friendship, practical and sympathetic. There is humour of the sharpest kind, which makes for the bearableness of their conditions. There is vision beyond what many could conceive possible, and ambition which, though often thwarted, dies hard and with a struggle. One cannot help feeling that many of our prisons harbour men and women whose ambitions had to find expression somehow, and, only in defeat after the pursuit of higher things, took shape in crime, which, if successful and undetected, might have given the victims the opportunity their ambitions required for true fulfilment. The slum is the destroyer of character, the condemnation of our civilization, and the call upon the Church to prove the value of its Christian message.

What can our Church do in this grave problem of our slums? It is impossible for our pulpits to proclaim the nature and extent of the problem. But the urgency of the matter must be brought home to the Christian conscience. The indifference of our people must be destroyed, and it must constantly be made known that it is not in accord with the will of God that conditions of life for so many of our fellow men should be as ghastly as they are. The solution is not the provision of churches, halls, or recreative rooms in these slum areas. The value of work done by this means must not be belittled. But that way leads to no solution, and

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tends to justify the neglect in tackling the problem radically. Above all the Church must always be reminded that, whatever action be taken to-day by the public authorities to ease the situation and remove the most objectionable features of slumdom, much still remains to be done. The Church, in the interest of the poor, must continue to be vigilant in this matter, and ever use its influence to keep alive the conscience of the nation, so that conditions may continue to improve and the rising of social level may affect and benefit the poorest as well as the other grades of society. This is nothing other than the Gospel, which we preach, put into practical expression.

Let the words of the Prince of Wales be remembered :

“ This nation cannot afford, first from an economic point of view, the perpetuation of the slum. Nor can the nation afford the moral and mental degradation which slum conditions create in those who inhabit them. Let public opinion awaken. Great tasks require great energy, vision and determination. Let us put forward a great national effort, irrespective of party or of politics. Every generation has a dominating social task, and so let our age, our generation, be remembered as the one in which we swept away this blot that disgraces our national life.”

CHAPTER VIII

BUILD NO MORE CHURCHES?

CHURCH EXTENSION

THE question of Church Extension is dependent upon two primary conditions. These are the necessity of the parish or district where the population has outgrown the capacity of an existing church to give it the proper pastoral supervision and adequate facilities for religious observances, and the necessity of a district where the population may not be so great but has gathered at such distance from a place of worship as to make its religious duties irksome if not practically impossible. It is well to state these conditions quite definitely. Other supposed conditions are not of primary importance, and their consideration with undue emphasis is apt to confuse the issue where the call for Church Extension is meeting with objection.

For example, in determining whether in a given area a new church is required it is of no value to consider whether the population to be served is church-going or otherwise, whether in fact it is christian or pagan. In both cases Church Extension may be necessary, for the Church must always provide for its children and must also seek the welfare of those still outside its influence. The Church must keep guard, as well as use its resources

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to attack the forces of evil. It is no less foolish in spiritual affairs than in business affairs to neglect the interests already secured while endeavouring to create new ones. If these two primary conditions are kept in view there need never be any arguments as to the wisdom of creating new charges.

That there are already sufficient churches in proportion to the population in Scotland cannot be denied. But only the most superficial thinker would therefore decide against an extension movement. It is almost too ridiculous a plea to waste time refuting. By what power of reasoning can it be contended that no new church should be established in a new area where a population of 10,000 is settled, because, in another area three or four miles away, there are two or three churches supplying a rapidly diminishing population and one, or two, of them half empty? If the argument be that modern transport is so developed that no trouble would result, even if the inhabitants of the new area had to travel the extended distances, then a real ignorance is shown of the habits of modern life and of the fatal ease with which ordinary mortals fall into ways of careless indifference and neglect. The Church may dislike the necessity for Church Extension, but as it seeks to carry on the ministry of Jesus Christ it has no alternative. Since Pentecost, the Church of Christ has lived and persevered only by means of Church Extension.

It is a curious comment on the nature of man that, in the pages of the Church's history early and late, there appear the same objections, displaying similar selfish interest and cherishing vested rights. Coulton in his *Scottish Abbeys and Social Life* cites

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the case of St. Andrews in 1199, where the Bishop "reported to Innocent III that the town had outgrown its single (and probably small) parish church, and that it would be perilous to souls to struggle on any longer under these conditions. Innocent, on the principle that 'peril to the souls should outweigh the loss of worldly goods,' gave the Bishop leave to build a new church, but with precautions which showed how definitely even the strongest of the popes were obliged to consider vested pecuniary interests in such a matter."

This obstacle to Church Extension was in practically all cases to be met with at the instance of neighbouring churches. To-day the situation is somewhat altered and, in the nature of things, more complicated. If we leave earlier history for the moment and compare the present-day movement with that instituted in Scotland a hundred years or more ago, we shall find that the two primary conditions defined above are present to both, yet with differing degrees of importance. In 1828, when the Church of Scotland set up its Committee on Church Accommodation, the condition of the populous areas was its chief stimulus. The towns and cities of Scotland had begun to assume proportions that previously were undreamt of. Their bounds did not extend to such a degree as to necessitate new churches at considerable distances from each other. Very many of the new churches erected under Dr Chalmers' scheme stand still within five or ten minutes walk of the old parish church.

The Church of Scotland in these early days was concerned with the increase of population

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demanding not so much a place of worship as the pastoral care of an increased number of ministers, and the intensive service which a relatively small congregation could provide. "We shall never make head against the accumulating profligacy and irreligion of our cities," reported Dr Chalmers to the Assembly in 1835, "but with seat rents low enough for the admission of the working classes and with parishes small enough to allow a thorough visitation of each assigned locality by the minister and his co-adjutors in the eldership." To-day the emphasis is on the other condition, namely, that of distance from the existing churches. There is no material increase of population. The necessity for Church Extension to-day arises from distribution of the existing population. This produces the most serious objection in the nature of vested interests, for, as has been mentioned elsewhere, the creation of a new Church Extension charge has the initial difficulty of creating a new problem elsewhere. The difficulty has already been established by the movement of the population from one part of the town or city to the other. But the difficulty is increased by the fact that, out of the old areas with their aged buildings and properties approaching slum conditions, it is the best of the population who have moved to the new areas. It is only ministers and office-bearers with the spirit of the Baptist who can watch with equanimity the increase of others and the decrease of their own influence in a community.

To-day the Church is compelled to tackle a Church Extension programme involving the erection of thirty or forty new charges within the least

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possible time. At no time in the history of Scotland has there been more rapid development in the housing of the people. The early years of the nineteenth century witnessed a tremendous rush for the building of churches, but the cause, while due partially to increase of population, was mainly due to the inaction of the Church towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the cities and towns of Scotland were really coming into birth. To-day the towns and cities are extending their housing areas. Modern transport is making it possible for the city workers to leave the heart of the city and dwell in the outskirts. The rapidity of this municipal development is a feature of modern life. The age is bound to be characterised as one of revolution in housing conditions. This very rapidity, and the sudden expense which it involves, are marked by the nature of the houses being erected. The old solidly built stone house characteristic of Scotland is conspicuous by its absence in many of our housing schemes. The type of building is brick and roughcast, in a style which gives cause for speculation as to its durability.

This gives the Church reason to question the policy of erecting substantial church buildings in areas where a comparatively short life may be given to the existing houses. Is it wise to build churches to stand more than a hundred years when the surrounding properties may not survive fifty? On the other hand, the question is asked if it is sound policy to make the House of God a building marked by cheapness and lacking the dignity befitting the Church? It is probably well to observe that even though the existing houses in many areas do not

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withstand the rigours of our northern climate beyond a period of, say, fifty years, experience proves that areas once built on seldom revert to desolation. Gradually decrepit houses are renewed as time goes on, and the presence of a good substantial church building will always tend to secure the continuance of the population within easy distance of it.

In contrast to Church Extension in former days, the modern policy is to erect in a new area not merely a church building but also adequate church hall accommodation. The benefit of this policy is too obvious to require emphasis. The Church of the future is going to have greater place in the communal life and interest than it has had hitherto. It is of value that these buildings are being conceived of not separately but as parts of a whole. In many cases where it has been found necessary in earlier days to add to the church or hall, the results from an architectural point of view have been appalling. It matters not now who was to blame—architect, minister or congregation, or all put together. The incongruities remain a relic of an age devoid of æsthetic taste. Luckily every effort is being put forth to-day to avoid such travesties of church architecture; but it must be confessed that the encouragement from architects is distinctly feeble. For some reason or other, the large body of architects are timid to a degree to venture beyond the styles of ecclesiastical architecture common to past ages. The plans submitted resemble in many cases a bastard building, with features Gothic, Norman, or the conventional nineteenth century conglomerate. The venturesome architect—and there are some here and there—seems to prepare his plan of what

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he thinks might suggest novelty, with dread of the consequences and almost certain that a body of commonplace, hidebound ecclesiastics will hold up their hands in horror. The result in the main is that the ordinary and conventional wins every time.

When the existing pressure on Church Extension is slackened and we are in possession of something like fifty new buildings in various parts of the country, I wonder if we shall find ourselves in possession of an ecclesiastical architecture which can be dated as peculiar to this period? Perhaps it is too much to expect that this age of confused thinking and fearful uncertainty should produce anything other than buildings of confused architecture and fearful pretentiousness. Yet the age which has given to Scotland the national war memorial at Edinburgh Castle and has produced a Sir D. Y. Cameron, is surely one of creative genius and artistic sense. There should be no excuse on the part of architects that they cannot go ahead of the sentiments existing in the Church. They ought to lead the Church in matters of design and devout expression. The Church has the right to expect that those who profess the art of design will be so far advanced in their ideas as to call for restraint. The check on architectural progress should surely come, if it has to come, from the laity and not, as too often happens to-day, from the professional.

Having dealt with these one or two points which may reasonably be regarded as to some extent subsidiary, it may be of interest to discuss Church Extension in its general bearings on the life and work of the Church. The national appeal which has been launched by the Home Mission Committee

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for £180,000, is sufficiently arresting to command the attention, if not the whole-hearted support, of the people of Scotland. It has demanded the recognition of a grave necessity laid upon the Church to provide religious ordinances, without which large masses of the population could not hope to be saved from the degradation of their moral and spiritual sensibilities. It is not difficult to see in it the signs of religious revival, and its prosecution will do more than any organised revival movement to stir the Church to new enthusiasm and endeavour. The sudden necessity for this increased Church Extension is the effect of causes outwith the Church. It is none the worse of that. Yet it is well for the Church to recognise that its virtue in this respect is forced upon it, and its failure to meet the existing needs would be a condemnation from which it would not recover in a hundred years.

The ignorance, even of Church members, of the affairs which most concern them, is often so gross, that it is not difficult to find many who, through this national appeal, are conscious of Church Extension for the first time. Yet the Church has never ceased to extend, and for the last hundred years the Home Mission Committee has been steadily building churches to meet the constant needs of the country. Within our own life-time no fewer than 371 new churches have been built, the average being something like seven and a half per year. The programme presently before the country, for the building of thirty new churches and some twenty halls, is therefore nothing more than an intensive scheme necessitated by abnormal conditions. When the sum aimed at is realised and these churches

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built, the need for Church Extension will continue and will require to be met not by any abnormal method of appeal, but by the steady liberality of the Church.

The method presently employed in dealing with Church Extension needs calls for comment. It is unusual for the Church of Scotland to lay upon its people as a whole the responsibility of erecting these new churches. There seemed no other way of meeting the urgency. But this is a distinct break with tradition, and one which cannot be regarded without grave misgivings. All down the ages, so long at least as the territorial principle of ecclesiastical responsibility existed, the Church maintained the method of Church Extension on a parochial basis. Whenever a new community gathered within the area allotted to a church, and the formation of a new congregation with the need for new buildings was called for, the existing congregation was sponsor for the new enterprise. The "Matrix Ecclesia" was not the Church of Scotland as a whole but the congregation of the parish, whose pride it was to produce the daughter church and maintain it till, in the course of years, it was able to stand on its own feet. This motherhood entailed travail and anxiety and difficulty almost invariably, but in so doing it led to pride and satisfaction and an honourable sense of sacrifice in the cause of Christ's Kingdom. All through Dr. Chalmers' great campaign on behalf of Church Extension a hundred years ago, he realised the immense value of this immediate interest in local necessities, and although he also was driven to make a national appeal he repeatedly encouraged the

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motherly instincts of parochial congregations. Something is lost to the new congregations when, in after years, they cannot claim near kinship with any neighbouring congregation, and it is practically no gain to feel that they have parentage in the entire Church of Scotland.

It is of the times that everything is made extremely easy for the Church's offspring. Effort is being made to ensure some adequate recognition on the part of the new Church Extension congregations of their financial indebtedness. Perhaps the call to repay part of the original outlay on the buildings may conduce to some degree of self-respect in the new congregations, but perhaps not. Time will tell. But the infant congregation which has had to struggle and fight in its early years has always secured to itself an enduring strength. The independence won at blood sacrifice has been worth preserving just because it was so hardly come by.

It is almost within the category of heresy, so far as Church administration is concerned, to question the wisdom of building so many new churches at this time of day. It was obviously the easiest line to take to call upon Presbyteries to survey the existing housing schemes within their bounds and tabulate their needs on the basis of so many churches to meet the religious requirements of so many people. But is that sound policy to be adopted always because it was the procedure for the last hundred years? Are the customs of the age such as to encourage this multiplication of churches, especially within reasonable walking distance of existing buildings? Even if it means repetition of what has been said elsewhere, it is well to suggest here that

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consideration might be given to the idea of a central church to be used exclusively for public worship, to which all far and near might come. Instead of having small congregations all worshipping in their own little sanctuaries at the canonical hours every Sunday, a succession of services might be held in the same building each Sunday to which masses of people might come as time and opportunity suited them. A staff of clergy could keep these services going, and the same staff keep in close pastoral touch with the people through the week. This might not, indeed ought not to, obviate the necessity for providing halls in different areas for the promotion of the usual church organisations, but their provision would at no time entail a cost anything equal to the accepted method of Church Extension.

There is so little hope of such ideas finding place in the policy of the Church within measurable time, that it is felt their expression will in no way affect the present national appeal. They should not find expression were it thought at all hurtful. The Church stands to gain by the achievement of even what is to-day set before it in the way of Church Extension.

It is no afterthought which suggests the relationship of Church transference to Church Extension. The idea that by transference of a congregation from one area to another a saving in cost is to be effected is in the main quite illusory. In entertaining it little or no thought is given to the needs of the areas from which the transfer is contemplated. If by transference is meant the taking down of an old church stone by stone to be replaced elsewhere, so far from there being any saving, the cost would

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probably be very much greater. If the idea is that site values, as well as property values, might be realised and used elsewhere, that is extremely problematical and in many cases clearly worthless. The cases where transference is worth while are infrequent and ought not to be regarded as forming part of a Church Extension scheme. Cases are happening, and the utmost jubilation follows their completion, but one wonders what will be the result if, in course of time—not too far distant—our city populations return to the centres, and the last state of these areas be worse than the first. Transference has all the possibility of tragedy, and the Church must be wary that it does not earn the reputation of following prosperity and letting poverty lie in its own misery. The most honourable sites are where congregations cannot maintain themselves, where they are ministering to a people in need in every sense of the word. The Church ought to hold on against seeming defeat to the very last extremity. It is not always defeated though its head be bowed and bloody. Its glory is always in the Cross.

CHAPTER IX

LET US PRETEND THAT THE HALL IS INVITING

THE CHURCH HALL

It presents a dreary front on the sunless side of a drab street. The door has had the paint long since kicked away from the foot of it. Dirt, torn paper and cigarette cartons are swirled into the corners at the side of the door step. The vestibule is the true expression of inhospitality. A blank wall faces the entrance, sometimes dolefully broken by a mural tablet describing the forgotten virtues of a pre-historic cleric. Inside the hall, first impressions gained in the vestibule are not belied. Forms of weight and varying degrees of discomfort fill the area. The walls are dismal to an extreme. The Boys' Brigade drum reposes carelessly on the top of the inner porch. At the front of the platform is a desk prodigiously ugly in its cheap pretentiousness. The whole tone of the place is signified by an old rusted table bell by means of which a weak-minded superintendent demands the attention which he cannot command.

Such is the church hall which we have been wont for the last fifty years to extol as the porchway to the House of God. It is anything but inviting though its purpose was to invite. It was built to be the means of raising the tone of the district, but

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it has allowed itself to fall slightly below the misery and squalor of the parish. The one satisfaction is that many of our Church people, who rather pride themselves in their possessing accommodation for Christian work, do not know where their hall is. It saves a considerable amount of shame. Any modification of this picture to suit the parish hall in the country districts is slight but it is offset by the fact that its environment is distinctly fairer.

Consolation offers itself when we believe that this description can apply only to halls built thirty or fifty years ago. Under the stimulation of substantial grants given in recent years by the Home Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland and by the Baird Trust, a new type of hall has been erected in connection with a very large number of congregations. Of differing sizes and varying degrees of elaboration, these halls range in cost from £800 to as much as £9,000. In every case lightness and brightness have been insisted on. At the opening nothing but pride and satisfaction could be expressed. In every case it has been insisted on that the building was free of debt, but in scarcely any instance was any attempt made to endow its upkeep. It is this serious defect which explains to a large extent the condition referred to at the beginning of this chapter. Almost invariably, a hall is insisted upon by the congregation, without thought or consideration being given to the additional financial burden it is going to mean in years to come.

Whether we like it or not, the Church is now a financial concern, and it is gall and wormwood to be forced to realise that many of our congregations

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are becoming more and more concerned with their financial stability rather than with the saving of souls.

No congregation should ever proceed to build a hall unless it can see its way to the additional provision of at least £60 a year. This is a bare minimum. The average Church member will ask how this money is to be spent. He sees a new building duly opened, and cannot realise that, after youth has had its fling within its walls for a year or two, repairs will certainly be required. Heating, lighting, &c., soon mount up in pounds, shillings and pence, and of course the Church officer grumbles about the increased call on his time with never an evening to himself, so he is easily pacified by an addition of £30 or £40 a year to his salary.

It used to be a complaint that money was being needlessly expended on paid singers, but the modern church officer, in many cases, is being paid as much as would provide an excellent quartet in the city. In one case, where application had been made for a grant from the Home Mission Committee towards a missionary assistant, on the grounds of a poor and needy congregation with a Home Mission problem at its door, the church officer was paid £175 a year. The Presbytery supported the application on the plea that the salary given was not too much for a full-time worker. But that is not the point. The Church is not an employer of labour in the first instance. For any congregation to plead for the help of other congregations to do its own parochial duty, in such circumstances, is really to reverse the order of its obligations and to fail in its essential duty.

The effect of this financial insecurity and lack of

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foresight is that our halls are allowed to degenerate. And yet, without endowment, some congregations are wise enough to see the value of expending a few pounds each year in paint and varnish to preserve the amenities at least.

I have always a feeling that the occupiers of our church halls are more progressive and modern than those of the church itself, even though they be the same people. Modern tendencies get their first opportunity in the hall. There is a latitude allowed there which the strictest conservative in church matters would not tolerate in the House of God. This is not such a digression as it seems. Ministers and elders should not fail to accept the opportunity this affords for the gradual introduction of desirable innovations. To many there is deep regret at the absolute divorce between the Church and the æsthetic arts. These could so easily be called to the service of the Church, not only for the beautifying of its buildings and the attractiveness of its services, but also for the deepening of the spirit of worship and the keener sense of the Presence of the Creator of all things. In a very modest way much might be done to remove the drabness of our halls by the decoration of their walls. This could be done quite cheaply by the simple introduction of reproductions of good pictures. So important does this seem, that it would not be amiss to appeal to the committee set up by the General Assembly to advise on the erection of mural tablets and memorials in our churches. If this committee is retained and is animated with the spirit which originally suggested it, it would not be thought trivial by it to offer a selection of appropriate pictures for use in halls.

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I am persuaded that a great deal might be gained, if everything was done by the local parties to secure orderliness in the use of their hall. I do not mean that Sunday school orderliness suggestive of the superintendent's bell ; but no church hall should ever be anything else than tidy and clean. It is high time the piling up of forms, mostly upside down, at the back or side of the hall were discontinued. If space is not secured for these under the platform, then space ought to be provided elsewhere. It cannot be forgotten that the hall is primarily for young people, and every attempt should be made to create impressions which make for an orderly and seemly life.

The modern type of hall to which reference has already been made is symptomatic. It no longer consists entirely of one large hall, but has in addition one or two, or in some cases, three smaller halls, a guild room, and a kitchen. Fortunately, the influence of the women in the Church is beginning to be felt in such arrangements. In most cases the platform is specially designed for dramatic entertainments, and this is all to the good. The stultifying effect of Puritanism is passing, and the old association of the Church with the drama is creeping back. Sometimes when the writer reads the lessons taught in our Sunday schools, he longs for the enlightenment which will allow of the Bible stories being dramatically presented to the children. Fortunately, at Christmas time some of our ministers have been enterprising enough to have Nativity plays in their churches. No complaints have ever been heard against these, but rather the reverse. Lessons are taught and the noble virtues of the

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Christian story inculcated, in a way which the children can never forget. In this direction development could be enormously advanced in the hall.

One word of caution is necessary. Care would require to be taken to see that this did not degenerate into the old silly sketch-producing indulged in by very raw amateurs, who give a doubtfully vulgar play at the soiree with the minimum of preparation. The note of instruction ought always to be there. The Church is a dead failure as an entertaining agency. More and more it falls short in the competition in modern amusements. Through the good influence of the British Broadcasting Corporation the cultural education of the nation is rising rapidly, and the Church, if it cares, stands to gain thereby. But it must itself be in the vanguard of cultural progress. I have seen morality plays excellently given by society girls and serving maids together in a west end church hall in Glasgow. The same could be done in the east end, and I am not persuaded that the effect would not be equally profitable.

An issue has been raised in one or two quarters that will bear discussion. In areas where the class of lads especially is not all that it might be, how much licence should be allowed in the use of the church hall? In a certain village, the church people, by far the minority of the population, pleaded for a hall of their own in order to compete with the village hall, erected and controlled by a number of the villagers themselves. It was alleged that this hall was only a howf for gamblers. Examination proved that a series of rules had been drawn up,

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printed and exhibited in several places on the walls. These were excellent rules, most emphatically prohibiting alcoholic liquor and gambling within the premises, and there was nothing to show that they were being violated. But suppose they had been, or suppose a church hall had been erected, and equally excellent rules had been instituted and broken, what should be the attitude of those responsible for its supervision? Is it better to gather under the wing of the Church those whose sole excitement and variety in life are to be found in betting and card playing, in the hope that the association with others of a different spirit will create a new tone and purify a vitiated taste? Or ought the Church to let alone the gambling schools which hide in scrub or disused brick work, and admit it has lost these young fellows for good? The questions are not easily answered without the practical help of shrewd and sympathetic office-bearers. But it seems clear that the answer of Christ Himself would be definitely on the side of courage and understanding.

The Church has not yet learned how to use its halls to the best advantage. It is not enough to put them at the free disposal of the multitudinous organisations within a congregation which are set on foot in the name of religion. The Church hall will be adequately used, only when it is made the centre of the social life of the parish, when those outside the congregation as well as those within it are able to feel that it is there for their benefit.

CHAPTER X

GIVE US THE GOSPEL

THE PREACHER AND THE EVANGELIST

EVANGELISM has suffered most from its friends and has nothing to fear from its enemies. It has incurred so much odium that it is no unusual experience to be warned against using even the name, if that can be avoided. The name is an old name and covers a great deal that neither the Church nor the soul of man can do without. It has suffered from abuse, from a narrowing down of its conception to particular methods and devices which do not commend universal approval, and from an arrogant appropriation which unfortunately reminds one of the people whom Isaiah scorned—"which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me ; for I am holier than thou."

But evangelism is the function of the whole Church. That the Church has endured to this day and increased in power is proof that it has not neglected its duty in this respect. The condemnation of certain ministers that they have no Gospel is, in the main, the result of hasty judgment. Where any man neglects to proclaim a Faith that will save, it is safe to say that the souls of men who must have such a faith will seek for it elsewhere within the Church.

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Bound up with the idea of evangelism in many minds is the idea that it served well enough in a credulous age, when hell-fire burned brightly and sulphurous fumes poured forth from the pulpit ; when men who rapped their snuff boxes, and women who fanned themselves to new interest, needed some such shock to their idle concern. To-day we are too much enlightened to tolerate the crudities of the revivalist. The whole outlook on life has changed. We know now what the Bible really is. The critics of the New Testament have treated us to an analysis of its component parts, so that the elements, sometimes authentic, sometimes corrupt, are exposed in all their nakedness. The Old Testament is left with scarce a shred of respectability, so that even the veriest babe in the pulpit delights to trample it under his feet and revile it for the edification of the crowd. Science has opened our eyes in another direction. We have not yet recovered from the shock produced by the theory of evolution. We know too much now to be caught out by the simple tricks of the evangelist. This new attitude of the world makes it more urgent than ever that the Church endeavour to present the Evangel with still greater courage and by more appropriate methods.

It is well that we think of this subject first of all in relation to the Church's regular ministry. It is a healthy sign that here and there are appearing somewhat timid but persistent criticisms of the Scottish pulpit. It has earned for itself no mean reputation for sound and scholarly preaching. It has been credited with an extremely high level of intellectual and philosophical acumen. It has

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suffered, in fact, from an undue prominence militating against the spirit of worship which ought to dominate our services. It cannot be denied that it gratified the pride of the Scottish people in their profundity when every householder read his Bible in family worship and every room had its little bookcase of sermons. But this new age is of the novel and not of the Bible. Beyond the exercises in English prose, and the scant allowance of religious instruction given so excellently in our day schools up to the age of fourteen, the Bible is virtually a closed book, and our worshippers in church are becoming more and more ignorant of its contents.

It is undoubtedly true that congregations are more keenly alive to the latest discoveries in the realm of science, and more in touch with the advancing knowledge of the times. It may even be that they are more critical of much that is given them from the pulpit. But the age is one of the specialist, and nowhere is this truer than in the Church. Many of our preachers have crowded into the short twenty minutes sermon as much as they possibly can of modern knowledge in its keenest form, in the belief that the minds of their hearers demand that they should. It is an utterly wrong conception of preaching. The preacher is the specialist not in literary form, nor in scientific or philosophical development, but in religious thought and, above all, in Christian doctrine. This is becoming more and more true. The average worshipper in our Churches comes anxious to be told what his faith is and ought to be. He is at all times much more desirous of being told the secrets of God's revelation, as given in His Word

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and elsewhere, than of listening to matter which he can easily get otherwise and in better form, and with which he is for the most part already quite familiar. The preacher of the future is going to have a golden opportunity of presenting the Evangel with a freshness unknown till now, and with the certainty that it will be welcomed as a discovery of fascinating interest to the world.

To-day the studies of our mansees seem to be witnesses of revolt against the haphazard method of choosing a subject for Sunday's sermon, so common in recent times. Without quite knowing why, many of our preachers have tied themselves down to series of sermons, with no matter how thin a connecting thread, if only it determined for them beforehand what line of thought would be theirs as the Sundays creep on. This is finding expression to a growing extent in the recognition of the outstanding dates of the Christian year. The Scottish Church stands to gain enormously when the year is still more fully recognised and the cycle of Christian faith is covered by the preacher.

There is nothing more easy than to depreciate the influence and penetrating effect of Sunday to Sunday preaching. Who shall judge the type of preaching which shall best suit every conceivable type of hearer? It may be thought well that every sermon shall have a direct evangelical call in it, but experience does not bear witness to the better response given to the recognised evangelist. Yet there is something to be said for a decisive appeal being made to every ordinary congregation from time to time. Our congregations are refreshed and quickened by a vigorous presentation of the Cross

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of Christ as the only salvation for a sinful world. The soul of man will respond to preaching in which there is an apparent aim to effect real and practical and abiding conversion. How can the Church neglect the opportunity that is offered to it? It is no disparagement of our congregations to say that there are numbers of souls in them that need the call, and it is far from easy to reconcile oneself to the idea that the evangelist is concerned with the rebirth of a soul, while the ordinary pastor and teacher is only called on to nurture and perfect the life made new in Christ. No such differentiation should be tolerated for a moment. There is a definite and distinct call upon the ordinary ministry "so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him in the fellowship of His Church." To do this is, in the words of the Archbishops' Report on the Evangelistic Work of the Church, to evangelise.

But evangelism, as we know it, has come to be regarded as something over and above the service of the regular ministry, first, as a definite refresher to our Christian people, and, then, as an aggressive effort on the part of the Church to stir the dead bones of our Churchless communities. No one is foolish enough to suggest that evangelistic efforts in these directions are unnecessary. Revival in the Church and regeneration outwith it are always desirable and always somewhat impatiently looked for. The difference between the school of thought which would seek to create the atmosphere most suited to a revival, and that which argues against anything mechanical being associated with what can be only

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a spiritual process, is more apparent than real. No one can predict whether revival will come this way or that way. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth." But organisation and atmosphere are essential concomitants in every evangelistic movement.

Even at the risk of offending the susceptibilities of many devout people, we venture to make certain comments on modern evangelism. The Church has not up till now given enough attention to the mass of people who form the fringes of its congregations. These people must be sought after with the utmost care and patience. They do not recognise themselves as in need of anything more than they presently possess. They have grown up in Sunday school and in the ordinary life of the Church. They are seldom critical of the Church's organisation and administration. They leave the burdens and responsibilities attendant on Church life to the energetic members who seem to delight in these things. They admit the value, the indispensable value, of the Church, and are glad to be of its fellowship. But they need a deeper sense of their fellowship in Christ and a devotion and dedication to His Service, which they do not possess. The Church has not yet found out an evangelistic method which will appeal to these people. No series of organised meetings will attract them. They are to be won for Christ only by love made manifest to them through the lives of their fellow church members.

Attempts towards creating evangelistic move-

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ments appear from time to time, as though the Spirit ought to act as a pendulum swinging from extreme to extreme with fair regularity. It used to be said in Wales that revivals come every ten years. This belief is not entirely confined to Wales. All this calculation—for that is what it really amounts to—has had a rude shake during and since the war. It was expected by many earnest people that a world, conscious of failure in national and international affairs which led to war, would be in a fit and proper mood to be led into and to welcome a revival. In Finney's book on *The Philosophy of Revivals* six conditions leading to revival are given, and one of these postulates it, as a necessity, that the wickedness of the wicked should grieve and humble and distress Christians. Unfortunately such a condition has not been overwhelmingly apparent, and yet it is difficult to believe that a revival would be out of place or untimely if it should come to-day.

Is it not really a foolish thing to anticipate revival at any particular point of time, approximate or otherwise? When St. Francis set out to preach the Gospel to the multitudes, I imagine such mass movements as we look for in these days were quite outwith his ideas. Whitefield and the Wesleys were attractive and cultured preachers passionately fond of addressing large audiences, but the revivals which followed their energetic ministries were not premeditated as that for which they ought to strive. There are times during our own age when one is forced to wonder if a revival, though not definitely noted as such, is not in actual being. Must revivals always be associated with the name of some great orator? Is it impossible to imagine that this social

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revolution going on at the present moment, in the form of new housing conditions for our people, is a form of revival, the full effects of which are still to be revealed ?

It may well be that Buchmanism, very wrongly known as The Oxford Group Movement, has all the elements of a revival. In so far as it is undoubtedly finding response of a kind in a section of the community which is not easily moved in spiritual matters, it is to be warmly welcomed. It is no condemnation of it that some people can find nothing new in it. Undoubtedly its call for Christian fellowship is old enough. Its emphasis on complete change of life and witness bearing is no amazingly fresh pronouncement. Its declaration that the soul should at all times and in all circumstances submit to the guidance of God, is so obvious as to be almost ridiculous. Yet the movement is one with which the Church ought to be sympathetic. The fellowship it advocates can find its true expression only within the Christian Church. To allow it to develop into the setting up of an organisation independent of the Church is to defeat its own object and to do irreparable harm to the furtherance of Christ's kingdom. No one can be ignorant of the dangers associated with this movement. It is vitiated at the moment by exhibitionism and the emotional exuberance of young converts. It remains to be seen how far its gains, which are undoubted, will submit to the theological education which is necessary for its duration. Meantime the groups are too often smitten by an unrestrained enthusiasm, which differs from that commonly associated with revivals only as the form of a Public

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School boy differs from that of the public-school boy.

In Scotland we are advocating the promotion of group campaigns in towns where several churches exist, and in areas where several congregations can unite. Such campaigns are directed specifically against the non-church-going public, and they have value at any rate in making it patent to the outsider that the Church means business. It is a curious fact that the non-church-goer has nothing but contempt for a lethargic Church, and respects any religious body which is persistent in its endeavours to make him mend his ways. Nothing but good can follow group campaigns, if conducted on right lines and after careful preparation. I have never been able to understand the craze, of recent origin, for calling upon students to carry on this highly specialised and important work. How many of them, with their scanty knowledge of the world and their minimum of theological training, have the audacity to address large open-air meetings, is past finding out. By the grace of God it was soon found out how insane was this attempt. Imagine striplings of twenty odd years daring to reason with hard-bitten communists out of the pits, and hoping to escape annihilation! One should not condemn the students. To them it was excellent experience. But the price was too dear for the Church to pay. Not only must the evangelist have a theological basis for his appeal, but he must be ready to make it out of his own experience, tried and tested in the fire.

The personality of the leaders of such group movements is of vital importance. Too much

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stress is placed upon the necessity for fluency. Whatever men are chosen for this work should, as far as possible, be able to put their message in an attractive and appealing form. But the Church should be on its guard against the preacher who poses as an evangelist because words come easily to him, or because he is blessed with a singing voice which on occasion can be brought into commission. Evangelists should be discovered by others and compelled, almost against their own wishes, to conduct such campaigns. What do we not suffer from the revivalist over-conscious of his indispensability! What more dangerous than the constant use of a man whose addresses have become mere repetitions, deadened by familiarity and vitiated by unreality. It ought to be possible to discover a humble evangelist, who is wise enough to hide himself at regular intervals in retreat with God so that, when he does answer the call of the Church for this work, his spiritual life should be at its intensest.

The group campaigns might be carried on periodically by the representatives of the Church in the areas selected. New voices should be heard and new arguments put forward, but these should never control the campaigns. After all, to non-church-goer as well as to church member, the local clergy are the accredited representatives of Christ's Church, and it is to them that the people look for guidance and help. Something is to be gained if the local churches would make up their minds, once in a while, to suspend their normal activities for a week or a fortnight, in order to concentrate on an intensive campaign, not on behalf of their own

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churches but on behalf of Christ and His Kingdom. Why should the outsider be made to believe that church membership is the Be-all and End-all of his religious experience? His present rebellion is very often against the repellent features associated with church life, and he resents any invitation to take his place in a fellowship the meaning of which he does not understand. Give men and women a vision of Christ crucified, and all else will follow. The world is waiting for the Church to make this vision real to it, and, when it does, the world will readily respond to His call to share in His fellowship.

CHAPTER XI

A WOMAN RECOGNISED IN THE CHURCH

WOMEN'S WORK

THE work of women in the Church is too important to be ignored, but it presents real difficulty. It would seem almost unfair to express any opinion on a side of the Church's work which, like this one, is obviously undeveloped and immature. But there has been ample time for development, and there is an accumulation of experience which should lead to a certain standardisation and organisation. This is still required in the Church of Scotland. A hundred years of experience of what can be and has been done by women in the Church ought to have produced something more than the chaos which presently exists.

When Dr Charteris, in 1887, persuaded the General Assembly to set up an organisation of women workers in the Church of Scotland, he based his scheme on a three-fold service for which women were supposed to be specially equipped. He recognised the existing organisations within the Church, which were mostly of a parochial nature ; he investigated leading institutions dealing with women's work in London and elsewhere ; and he set himself, in especial, to formulate a central body,

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whose main purpose would be to secure an adequate training for various types of women workers. He drafted an association containing three grades :

First, The Woman's Guild, which was simply meant to register existing women workers throughout the Church and incorporate them into parochial organisations, without apparently giving them any definite reason for their corporate existence. This was simply organisation for its own sake ;

Second, A Women Workers' Guild "of which such as are actively engaged to an extent to be defined, would be members." How this was to be an inner circle or advanced grade of the first is not easy to see. Apparently neither Dr Charteris nor anyone else could distinguish between these two grades, for they do not yet exist separately ;

Third, Deaconesses, who were really to constitute an order composed of widows and single women in Scotland who would consecrate their lives to the work of Christ through the Church. Obviously the founder of our Deaconess Order had bigger ideas than the temper of his times in Scotland would allow. He evidently hankered after a community of dedicated women such as may be found in the Roman and Anglican Churches, whose value to the work of their Churches is the envy of all unprejudiced Presbyterians.

All credit is due to Dr Charteris for his labours in this direction. It is a pity more care has not been taken to develop his ideas and give practical expression to his vision more nearly in accordance with his spirit. Two outstanding defects have been allowed to distract the original intentions. In the first place it has been sadly forgotten that the first

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intention was to further active service in the work of the Church. Perhaps it was inevitable to discover that the easy way to give service was in pounds, shillings and pence, and if it was so it ought to have been fought to the death. The current protest that the Guild is a spiritual body is a confession on the part of those who protest too much that it has sold its soul. May it recover it before it is too late ; for the Woman's Guild has come to stay and deservedly so. But the Woman's Guild must resist and disown the estimate of its value to the individual congregations as the money-making machine by which all the ordinary and special financial needs are to be met. It will require to go on raising a certain amount of funds, for in this direction it has unfortunately made itself indispensable. But it has far greater objectives awaiting its attention, and it can yet save itself by reaching out to these.

In the second place it has departed from the original idea of a truly dedicated service of women who were willing to give their all to the work of Christ. Unfortunately the Order of Deaconesses is now to be regarded as a career for women by which they obtain not only a life interest but a livelihood. There has been a gradual progress to this stage, and many deaconesses presently in the service are as conscious as others are of this injury to the order. In itself this, at the moment, creates more or less self-determined grades amongst the deaconesses. The existing rate of remuneration does not constitute much attraction to women ; nevertheless, it is sufficient to mar the development of the original scheme. Dr Charteris had a lofty

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enough conception of what the Church could furnish in the way of consecrated women, and it would have been better to have gone to the very edge of failure rather than yield. There is still room in the Church for an order of voluntary women workers who will reject every appeal the world can make in order to devote themselves to the service of Christ. Many women in the Church of Scotland, who have means and leisure, might be attracted to a Sisterhood of Service, if the Church would offer them recognition and scope for their labours. Probably this will come, when some zealous person will provide a house and endow it as a centre in one of our cities for this purpose.

It has always to be kept in mind that Dr Charteris propounded this scheme while convener of a committee which has never been in the position of employing such women workers, and unfortunately the Order of the Deaconesses was put under its care. The Church should either recognise the limitations of its Life and Work Committee or remove them altogether. An attempt is being made to reorganise the Order of Deaconesses by raising it out of the body of women workers ordinarily trained and parochially employed, but the Church has left the reorganisation in the hands of competing committees, and the result meantime is strife and lack of the wider vision. One can only hope that when experience comes to the women of the Church in administration and organisation, they will work out the salvation of their own spheres with courage and perspicacity. That in itself and in due time is women's work.

Meanwhile the majority of our deaconesses are

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so only in name, for their services to the Church are given as Church Sisters under the Women's Home Mission Committee. This committee is at the moment the most go-ahead committee in the whole Church, and it is being worthily supported by the congregations. Its work is mainly the training and provision of Church Sisters. In 1932 it reported 139 Church Sisters on its roll. It is noteworthy that 40 of these are employed in Edinburgh and Leith while only 43 are in Glasgow ; yet there is no comparison as to the needs of the two areas.

The time has come when a definite decision ought to be made as to the real purpose and function of these sisters. Many of them are little more than assistants to the minister for the building up of his congregation. The majority are provided for definite parochial work amongst the poor and depressed sections of our communities. When we are told that Sunday School, Bible Classes, Mothers' Meetings, Girls' Clubs, Junior Guilds and many other organisations offer full scope for the Church Sister's energy and talents, we are forced to wonder what has become of the voluntary workers in our congregations who are incorporated in the Woman's Guild. In many of the congregations employing Church Sisters there is as much money spent on the luxuries of Church life as would provide salaries for several sisters, whose proper sphere is in the east-end parish, where workers are scarce and the visit of any agent of the Church is doubly welcome.

When Dr Macleod instituted the Sisterhood he made no mistake as to the sphere of work which was intended, and he very wisely called them Parish Sisters. It is to be regretted that the name was

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ever departed from, and the change revealed a lack of understanding and a considerable amount of ecclesiastical bias. Even if a reversal of this decision cannot be obtained it would be well to use both names. Let the prosperous congregations, who desire a sister to do the drudgery of their church organisations, be given one under the designation of Church Sister. But give us Parish Sisters whose concerns are the poor and needy in our parishes. Give us sisters who care for the souls of the people whether they attend this church or that.

If that were done we might have a splendid band of Parish Sisters working in Glasgow and the more elegant Church Sisters assisting the ministers in Edinburgh and elsewhere. Glasgow needs them beyond the number of 43. There ought to be two or three times that number well distributed over the city, and in some districts and circumstances they ought to be employed in pairs. Meanwhile we find the same tendency in this work as we get elsewhere, of far too much emphasis being placed on the membership of organisations. If a Church Sister can show a full Mothers' Meeting and a record Girls' Club, she is succeeding, no matter what method she may employ to secure these results. But if she spends her time visiting the helpless women in their homes, keeping girls from the evils of city life, or helping a mother to make a brave fight with her hungry children, and can show no phenomenal figures, she has to defend herself against wrong judgments and foolish misunderstandings. The sister's work is not of the kind which can be tabulated, and indeed it is far from

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wise to ask her to address meetings of well-meaning women who feel they are doing the Church a service by attending a guild meeting and listening to the tales of misfortune which the sister chooses to narrate. Much of the real, effective work is ordinary and uninspiring, and has to be distorted to produce the mildest of thrills. If the women of the Church have not enough imagination to picture for themselves the need for parish sister work, they would be well advised to stay at home and mend socks.

There is scope for education amongst the women of the Church—as indeed also amongst the men—on social questions and problems yet unsolved. How this education is to be done is not clear. Literature, in the way of instructive leaflets, will appeal only to the few, who really want to know and who will by themselves find out the conditions under which our fellow citizens live. The system of lantern lectures, which the Church has developed with good success in recent years, is having a telling effect. It produces distinctly scrappy knowledge if not supplemented. For these lectures do not and are not meant to do more than create an interest and a keenness to learn still more of the subjects dealt with. There is room for a series of books dealing with many aspects of our social life in Scotland. In recent years much of the conditions of life in this country during the last two hundred years has been written up in popular and yet authoritative form, and discussions on such books would form an excellent background and lead to real appreciation of the problems still awaiting attention. Many of our women whose hearts are in social reform could place the nation in their debt,

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if they would specialise on certain aspects of social development and put in print the results of their observations.

What place women will ultimately take in the administration and furtherance of Home Mission work will depend on their education during this period, when they are realising their numerical strength and their opportunities for active service. The question of their place in the eldership or in the ministry has no need to be discussed here. Whatever be their standing in the Church, they will count as a necessary force for the amelioration of their fellowmen. At the moment their influence is enormous in itself and inspiring to all, whatever be their sympathies in the matter of privileges. The greatest thing that can be said of them is that they have not yet arrived at the stage where their full value to the Church is realised. But they are on the way.

CHAPTER XII

THAT MISSION ACROSS THE STREET

OTHER WORKERS

IF nothing were being done for Home Missions outside the Church of Scotland a very serious burden would rest upon it. The money supplied to its Home Mission Committee at the present time is inadequate, and a very large amount of necessary work would require to be left undone. The collective energy expended in Scotland for the furtherance of Christ's kingdom is beyond the measurement of any one man or set of men. The various churches are all engaged in Home Mission work in their ordinary congregational activities, while some of them deliberately set themselves to labour in the best Home Mission spirit, not to increase their membership, but to bring light and hope and courage into the hearts of those who are faltering or fallen by the way. The popular idea of Church rivalry is difficult to eradicate, but it is in the main a false interpretation of the enterprise of the Churches.

It would help to sound judgment, if critics of the Churches would learn to understand that the different Church bodies depend for their financial support almost entirely on a small but unswervingly loyal core of members, and that they have long experience

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which allows them to discount the material value of the additions that follow active Home Mission work. There are gains in every sense of the word which result from the activities of a live church. But they are as flakes of snow which fall on the frozen surface of a loch. They may add to the strength of the ice ever so little, yet they are the first to melt when the thaw comes. Anyone who knows anything of the work of the various Churches will acknowledge with thankfulness to God that the result is cumulative rather than disruptive, and the Kingdom increases while no individual Church can be said thereby to decrease.

Over and above the work of the various Churches there are numerous associations and bodies which make it their purpose to engage in missionary work of a special type or amongst a particular section of the community. It is difficult to name any to the exclusion of others. It may even be unwise to specify any, as they might well repudiate the suggestion that they are over and above, if by that is meant outside, the Churches. Many of these missions have been founded by loyal Church people, and the directorate is largely, if not entirely, composed of Church members, whose loyalties are to that extent in no way diminished. Many of them very definitely work in the closest co-operation with the Church. The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge and the West Coast Mission, for example, are quite independent of the Church so far as financial support is concerned. Neither of them reports to the General Assembly, nor do they take any cognisance of the Presbyteries. Yet their missions are in definite relationship to the

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parish church, and their members are members of the Church of Scotland. The relationship of the minister and the missionary has never been strictly determined, but they work to all intents and purposes as "bishop" and "assistant," and the people benefiting from the missions are expected to contribute to the funds of the Church. There is never the slightest suspicion of disloyalty to the Church in these missions, and the placing of a mission is always considered in areas where it would be of service to the Church.

Other missionary associations exist, which are less emphatic in their allegiance to the Church but none the less helpful in most cases. As corporate bodies they declare it their purpose to carry on evangelistic work in conjunction or in closest co-operation with the Church. Outstanding examples of these are to be found in the various city missions and the six county Christian Unions, which do excellent work in their own particular areas. Where there is trouble so far as loyalty to the Church is concerned, it is never the result of the policy of the directorate. But all bodies, not excluding the Church, whose work requires to be undertaken by agents, are at the mercy of the men whom they employ. Here as elsewhere, results count, and it is not easy to resist the temptation to persuade those who have been won in the mission to retain their membership in it.

A missionary is not always careful against encouraging Church members to forsake their original allegiance for the less formal service of the mission hall. The problem above all problems, with respect to lay missionaries, is how to engender

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in them a spirit of loyalty. It is to be supposed that Scotland is not unique amongst the countries of the world in that it harbours a very large number of men and women who are assured within themselves that their destiny in life is to preach. These aim at being evangelists. It matters not to them what be the purpose or constitution of the body which is prepared to employ them. Their desire in life is fulfilled if they become missionary agents somewhere, anywhere, where a building is available and a gathering of people can be encouraged to listen to them. They are mostly well versed in the letter of the Scriptures and in almost all cases truly devout souls, but they are largely indifferent to the traditions of the Church or body they represent, and they centre their religious organisation round their own personality. We do not forget the excellent exceptions whose work is beyond reproach.

Striking examples of this self-centred policy on the part of the agent reveal themselves from time to time, and unfortunately the revelation never comes until too late. The agent suffers from a sense of inferiority alongside a minister, and he cannot see what there is to differentiate the two servants of the Lord. The only thing he feels he cannot do is to dispense the Sacraments, and, as this constitutes an insuperable difficulty, his sense of personal worth seems to force him to belittle the value of the Sacraments or, if he can get enough support, to take upon himself to institute the Sacraments within his own mission. Such false steps are taken in direct violation of the Missionary Associations' desires, but the time has not yet come when these associa-

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tions have courage enough to deal with such a situation in the way it merits.

One particular case occurred recently in Fife. Until a certain missionary was appointed, this mission was a most valuable auxiliary to the local Churches and received much encouragement and help from the ministers and congregations. Under the new agent, whose attractiveness was undoubted, the mission flourished numerically, but, as it grew, it developed a spirit of independence and superiority which demanded all the rights and privileges of a Church where a Church was not required. Even when the missionary left, the spirit remained, and the parent association, which sincerely repudiated the movement, was helpless to prevent the appointment of another missionary of the same type. The courageous thing would have been to close the mission by withdrawing the financial support rather than encourage its wrongful development. Why is there constantly this lack of courage in religious matters? The people in Scotland are being injured by the reluctance of their ecclesiastical and religious leaders to hurt their feelings or take away any of their so-called privileges. It will be a blessed day for the people themselves, when their leaders really lead, and do not meekly acquiesce in whatever an irresponsible body of the people declare to be their rights.

It would be unjust to omit mention of missionary bodies who have no great love for the Church and emphatically repudiate some of its tenets, yet are working zealously and effectively for Christ's kingdom in Scotland. They are to a limited extent rivals, and to them proselytising is no crime. It

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is difficult to say how far their absence would be missed, assuming that the Church, or a religious body sympathetic to the Church, took their place. As things are at present, they serve a useful purpose so far as the Church is concerned. They meet the needs of those in the community who, for some reason or other, would be fault finders and disturbing influences within the Church. Good people they are, but they have their own point of view. It may be they do not believe in an ordained ministry, or the necessity for an educated ministry may not appeal to them. They may seek an emphasis on this or that, which they genuinely believe the Church does not provide. But, whatever be their peculiarity, they support the suggestion that it takes all sorts to make a world, and their place in the scheme of things is not without value. The Church has no antipathy to these bodies. They may be the source of local irritation on occasion, but in so far as they proclaim truth and give comfort in time of need, they cannot deny their alliance with the Church of Christ in the land and they share the Church's responsibility for Scotland.

Two reasons for the existence of so many independent religious organisations in Scotland at once present themselves. The Churches do not entirely meet the needs of all sorts and conditions of the people. With so many in Scotland it is difficult to see wherein they all come short. But according to some people apparently they do. In many cases it is probably difficult for some men and women to feel at home as members of a large organisation, even though it be no larger than the smallest Church. They feel the need of a fellowship

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which is intensive rather than extensive, and they are happy only when they can speak of the "two or three gathered together." They constitute themselves a little society whose value to them would cease if their success led to great numbers. Many of them dislike the formality which they attribute to the Churches. In this connection it is curious to see how many of these good people, who dislike formality in religious matters, love it and cherish it in other spheres of life. This applies within as well as without the Church.

The second reason is, that many of the lesser organisations exist in order to provide scope and opportunity for the enthusiast who must be *doing* something for the coming of the Kingdom. The Churches have not yet learned how best to make use of their enthusiasts who crave some responsibility and some piece of work entirely their own. It is seldom that the person of restless and excitable temperament can understand his neighbour who wishes to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. The latter will live and let live. The former must gather round him others of like passion and live in a perpetual storm of perfervid emotionalism. But he must do something, and his way is the only way. It is amazing to note how many of the unattached missions really owe their origin to the personality of one man. In most such cases their careers do not survive the vitality of the founder except it be to languish and ultimately die a natural death under his successor.

Appreciation cannot be withheld from the generality of these missions. They are multitudinous, and their results are preponderatingly

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beneficial. The ideal is undoubtedly concerted action on the part of all religious bodies in Scotland. Many obstacles prevent that ever being realised. To imagine that there could ever be one controlling body in religious work in Scotland is to ignore the human element in life. But is there no second best? Acknowledging the existing differences, and realising that the ultimate end is the same in all, is it impossible to conceive a federation of all Home Mission agencies in Scotland? It need not interfere with the constitution of the various bodies, but it might be able to take combined action towards a real national movement to win souls for Christ. Perhaps it might be tried in the near future by the holding of a national congress, in Edinburgh or Glasgow, to which representatives could be invited to acknowledge their common aim and recognise their mutual helpfulness. The larger organisations would doubtless agree, but the smaller ones might eye the proposal with suspicion. There is constant dread of absorption. The recognition of this should go far to remove suspicion. The Churches have nothing to gain materially by securing their sympathy and recognising their usefulness. Meanwhile the Church of Scotland prays for the success of all who labour in the service of Jesus Christ, and is ready to do anything to help where its help would be welcomed.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHURCH ON THE ROAD

THE TRAMP AND THE TINKER

“THE first tramp was Cain, the last will probably be the Wandering Jew. Between the two lies the history of a whole race of men, who sometimes deserve their ill-fortune and sometimes do not.”

These two sentences are quoted from a survey given by Frank Gray, one of the outstanding authorities on tramp life. The majority of us have taken the tramp for granted. He is so familiar to us as an idle, beggarly fellow kicking the dust of life's highway with all the indifference of a ne'er-do-well, that we have never troubled to ask what he really is and what is the problem of his future, if he can be said to have such a thing. Ought the Church to be interested in him? Surely the question need never be asked in a Church which claims to be national. Whatever be his mode of living, he is certainly part of the community, and having a soul to save merits the attention of the national Church. This is not generally how society regards the tramp. One half of the population prefers to ignore him, because it does not understand him; the other half professes to deal charitably with him by slipping odd pennies into his soft, unworked hand, while it believes the tramp somehow will always exist, but why, no one clearly knows.

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There is undoubtedly a problem here, and problems are only before us to be solved. The problem is national, in that a properly organised State should not have room for the wandering and homeless : and it is individual, in that somehow a man's life is at stake. A lifetime of sorrow and pain follows upon the cause which forces a man upon the road. How would you define a tramp ? He has been described as one who wanders the country, with or without an objective in view, and is apparently destitute. Everyone of us has seen him on his journeys, lonely, reserved, suspicious. Many have been conscious of the procession of unhappy, ill-clad and frequently unclean men, and a few women, ambling along to an unknown destination, unknown to the public, unknown too, to themselves, for they are " tramps " who seek no definite goal and no known destination. In the main they " mark time," awaiting death. Here is surely a startling fact. In proportion to the population we have to-day, roughly, four times as many vagrants as we used to have even in the bad old days.

What are the numbers in Scotland ? In June of 1932 there were 5,350 wandering folk apart from those in Orkney and Shetland. In December 1932 there were 3,606. These figures are for the counties alone. In the burghs there were 974 in June and 1,008 in December. The census is low and takes no notice of those who live habitually in lodging houses, but it is alarming enough as it is. It suggests enormous wastage in human life, and it suggests further a large parasite population, that exists chiefly on the charity of the poor. For it is too often the poor themselves who give indis-

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criminally to the beggar, without any consideration as to whether their charity makes for good or evil. Out of the 6,324 vagrants in Scotland in June 1932, only 247 were in receipt of casual relief. The rest lived on their wits or chiefly on the sympathy of others.

Another ray of light is shed on the tramp through the prison reports. In February 1933 no man answering the description of a tramp, vagrant, or person without fixed abode, was serving a sentence of penal servitude, and there is no record of more than two or three men having served such a sentence within recent years.

There are, no doubt, small sentences recorded against tramps for offences such as fighting and drunkenness. These are mainly the evidences of a few incorrigible drunkards. The number of such offences is extremely small in comparison with the ordinary convictions leading to prison.

There are three main reasons for the existence of the tramp. First, he is without work and, it is feared in many cases, is unworkable. It is, of course, not fair to say that all tramps are unworkable, for there is a section who are genuinely seeking work. But this section unfortunately, and particularly to-day, quickly degenerate into the incorrigible beggars. These beg to live in the early days of their vagrancy, and they live to beg as the only solution of their problem. Even behind this first reason quite often lies the matter of health. The road is the home of far too many physical degenerates. Taken as a whole, the physique of the vagrants is low. Do we question ourselves as to the destiny of many weak children after they

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leave school? The mental weaklings, what of them? Too sensible to be certified. Too incapable to earn their own livelihood. The modern system of education, which is providing special schools for the backward and weak, may help to check this source of vagrancy, but the problem is there, extremely difficult to solve.

A second reason is drunkenness. That introduces to the tramp class many at one time of good social standing, expensively educated, but quickly ostracised when they fall into the beastly clutches of inebriety. Curiously enough, this type often reforms through sheer lack of ability to pay for his indulgence, but he seldom rises and rehabilitates himself. Too rarely is there enough strength of will or brain left to help him to escape becoming a drudge of the road. These men just totter along until death calls a halt.

The third reason lies in the housing conditions of the very poor. We are living to-day through a social revolution. The standard of living is being raised enormously. The incessant cry is to do away with the slums and build better houses. Parts of all of our cities have been swept away and new corporation houses provided in other areas. But imagine a case such as this :—A family paid 6s. a month for a poor enough house to be sure, but it was a shelter. The property was pulled down, and they were offered a house at 6s. a week. They could not possibly pay so much. There was nothing for them but the road. In only too many of our towns people are being imprisoned because they squat in condemned houses. No doubt the convictions are just, but, if these people are too poor to take a house,

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there are going to be more tramps on the road. We have records of several families on the tramp because, although at one time quite law-abiding citizens with clear rent books, they are now utterly unable to meet the higher rents needed for the better houses.

Where does the Church come in in this? It is not its function to meet the economic situation and deal directly with housing, except to create public opinion on such matters. But the Church must do something. It cannot rest satisfied to leave any section of the population uncared for spiritually. At the present moment efforts are being made on behalf of those not definitely vagrant but living week by week in farmed-out houses in our cities, and a Church Sister has just been appointed to interest herself in these people in Glasgow. Our work in the lodging houses helps somewhat to reach the tramp, and I believe it is well to put it quite baldly and say that we find there that the tramp has a soul. He is not without God, not without hope in the world. The Church does mean something to him, and the Church through its Home Mission is determined to mean more.

Hitherto I have been dealing with the tramp generally, and in particular with the man who comes upon the road somewhat casually. There is the type who has been born to the open life, whose blood makes it well nigh impossible for him to do other than wander. In England, this is the gipsy. In Scotland, we know him as the tinker. We can deal adequately with his problem only when we remember his history. The earliest mention of the word "Tinker" is to be found in the *Liber*

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Ecclesiae de Scon, in which James "Tinkler" is described as holding land in Perth in the reign of William the Lion (1165-1214). The possession of land indicates that, originally at any rate, the tinker was not vagrant. The gipsies at Kirk Yetholm were first called tinklers about 1770, and the gipsy houses there have long been known as "Tinkler Row." The old nursery rhyme

"Hush ye, hush ye, dinna fret ye,
The Black Tinkler winna get ye."

clearly suggests the connection, in the popular idea at any rate, between the tinker and the dark-eyed gipsy whose reputation was suggestive of the rhyme. The link between the tinker and the gipsy is evidenced by natural features common to both :— their common partiality for bright colours and gaudy jewellery on the part of the women, and the occupations of horse dealing, tinkering and bagpipe-playing indulged in alike by the tinker and the gipsy man. There is a language peculiar to the tinker with traces of Romanes and Shelta. Mention is made of a family in Argyllshire who spoke English, Gaelic, Romanes and Shelta.

The tinker of to-day is of mixed blood, and not all who are tinkers are of real descent ; but, in the main, he is a man with a history and tradition to be reckoned with.

The tinker is never a lone man. He travels in families, and in some ways the clan system is more real to him than to the modern highlander. Families have their areas, to which they fairly commonly confine themselves, and disturbances which arise

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are more often than not the result of separate families coming into too close contact.

The tinker population is most dense in Perthshire. Of the 610 vagrants found in Perthshire in December 1932, 359 were of the tinker class. Under this census it was found that there were 209 children under 16 years of age, of whom 172 were tinker children. At once we see that the problem here is largely one of education. The State insists that these children put in 200 attendances at some school. If this is to be done the tinker must find a settled residence for the winter months. To go into a house is beyond him. It is beyond him for financial reasons. But it is also beyond him for traditional reasons. One tinker child ran away from a comfortable home provided for her, because she said she could not sleep in a box. It is a recognised fact that the tinker's family is extremely healthy, but once they come into town they are never free from colds. It is foolish to ignore such simple facts of experience, for they point to greater facts of far reaching consequence.

There was a time when the tinker could camp near some village school for several weeks, and then move on to some other camping place where his children could put in the attendances necessary to meet the requirements of the education department. But not now. Landlords are more and more making that impossible. A cruel system of moving the tinker on from place to place is making his life almost impossible. A first thought suggests that it might be well to be cruel in order to be kind, and to force the tinker to break from his wandering habits in order that his children may grow up

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knowing nothing other than a fixed dwelling. That, of course, is to ignore his tradition—not so easily crushed—and to enforce a regulation of human life which we would not tolerate for ourselves. Suppose we suggest that the tinker man and woman be left alone and their children be taken from them for educational purposes. That is surely a simple solution? But is it? The tinkers are devoted to their children, and within their slender resources are extremely kind to them. To separate them forcibly is to trample upon the tenderest feelings of the human heart.

Let me point out here that the tinker lives where another man would starve, and provided he may remain in his tent, he will earn his own living in his own mysterious way, receive no dole nor ask for one, and, in general, keep out of the way while the State is trying to contend with very bad times. But if the tinker is forced into the slums because he must educate his children or part with his children, sooner or later he drifts into being yet another economic burden on the shoulders of the ratepayers.

The tinker's trade is a thing of the past. You never see now-a-days the caravans covered with baskets, brushes and mops, which were picturesque features on the roads of thirty odd years ago. The days of cheap production and miscellaneous stores make the mending of pots and pans a lost occupation, and wire work is nothing more than a side line and a cover for begging. The truth is, the alternatives open to the tinker are grinding poverty, slumdom, immorality, disease, the tragedy of the poorhouse, or drink.

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Perhaps it might be interesting to learn some of the names of the tinker families in Scotland. There are two distinct families of McAllisters. There are McLarens, Johnstons, McMillans, Whytes intermarried with the Campbells. A woman of the Reid clan was said to have married beneath her because she married a Whyte. There are Wilsons, Nelsons, Camerons, Mackays, Lindsays, Crolls and Mullens. Stewarts, of course, abound in numerous branches, and some of them are becoming corrupt through hawker mixture. Some of the Townsleys are well-doing, others are incorrigible.

The Hanratties, Williamsons, McEwans, Man-yans and Syms vary in type and character. And last of all the McPhees. The Red McPhees come from Argyllshire, big, unruly and uncouth, while the Black McPhees belong to Caithness. Some of these last are the terror of the roads ; wild, cantankerous, and of low intelligence.

Now this is a big problem not yet solved, and we in the Church have ventured to suggest an attempt. We recognise the history and the temperament of these people, and venture to begin on their own conditions. A scheme has been devised to set off in Perthshire an area of experimental camping grounds, specially reserved for the tinkers, whom we shall select, where they will be permitted to pitch their crazy tents or draw on their caravans. Within access we shall build a small wooden school room, if need be, to which the tinkers' children will go and be taught by a trained teacher. This may also be a small welfare centre for social pleasures presently denied these people, and a place of worship and Sunday School on the Sundays. We shall

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require to keep the encampments well apart for many good and sufficient reasons, and have them supervised by a ranger. We do not regard the scheme as anything more than experimental, but we are working on hopefully. Great difficulties are right ahead of us and we are moving at the present moment extremely slowly. Our greatest obstacle is popular prejudice, which hates the very thought of the tinker and is ruthlessly hostile to any scheme for his betterment. It is foolishly obstructionist and obstinate, but public opinion is gradually becoming interested in the Church's experiment.

While this is being written a most heartening response is being received from landowners in a selected area in Perthshire where the Church's experiment is most likely to be tried out. That there will require to be certain modifications on the scheme as originally set forth must be taken for granted, but these are not likely to affect the purpose in view nor to militate in any way against its ultimate success. Although it is believed that the scheme will be welcomed by the tinkers themselves, the only fear of hurt to it is based on some apprehension as to how they will react to it. Obviously, as an experiment, the scheme can only be put into operation so as to include a selected number of families. It is possible that those excluded may resent what might appear favouritism, and in order to show their grievance they may do all in their power to cause trouble. Although the separate families drift about over a fairly wide stretch of country, news travels between them at a great pace, and what stroke of good fortune comes the way of one lot is quickly broadcast amongst the others and

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tends to produce an uncomfortable swarming when least expected and where least wanted. The most grievous accusations so far laid at the charge of the tinker by those who object to any attempt to help him is his propensity for poaching and the scattering of litter and rubbish on the sites of his recent campings. It is clearly to the advantage of his accusers to support any scheme which has for its ultimate end the eradication of such evils and the securing of a sense of decency and good living to which such conduct is naturally alien.

It would be unfair to pretend that this action on the part of the Church of Scotland is a new act of philanthropy with no antecedent so far as the welfare of the tinker was concerned. Before the war, and largely at the instance of the Rev. R. Menzies Fergusson, D.D., parish minister of Logie, Bridge of Allan, a central committee on the welfare of tinkers was in existence, more or less self-constituted, but representative of many Churches and philanthropic associations. This committee did much by personal interest in, and contact with, the various vagrant families, till on its representation the government in 1917 set up a departmental committee of tinkers (Scotland) "to inquire into the conditions under which persons of the tinker class in Scotland are at present living, and, keeping in view the recommendations relating to such persons made by recent commissions and committees, to report as to any steps which might be advisable in order to secure or confirm an improvement in these conditions."

A most valuable and interesting report was presented by the committee, and acknowledgment

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must be made to it for much of the substance of this chapter. The returns attached to the report show that in 1917 there were 2,248 tinkers, men, women and children, actually found in Scotland, while over and above that figure there were 309 tinker men serving with His Majesty's Forces. Space forbids a detailed summary of the recommendations, but it is interesting to note that the scheme proposed now by the Church differs very little from the schemes suggested then, but with this vital distinction. The departmental committee's desire was that the County Councils be instructed to prepare individual schemes for their respective areas and that the cost be borne partly by the State and partly by the counties and burghs. Experience proves that only a national institution like the Church of Scotland can adequately deal with the problem, and also that only a philanthropic body like the Church would be ready to guarantee the financing of any such schemes. If the Church should so far succeed where the departmental committee failed, namely in instituting the scheme of amelioration on a small and tentative scale to begin with, it will lead inevitably to the adoption of many of the more pretentious recommendations of the committee, either by the Church itself, or by the Church in co-operation with other bodies.

While this governmental action led to little more than the regulation which insists on the children of all vagrants putting in 200 attendances at a school or schools each year, the central committee did not diminish its interest. With finances provided by the Churches in Scotland according to a fixed proportion, the appointment of an agent to work

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amongst the tinkers was made in the person of Miss Hardy, the daughter of the minister of Fowlis-Wester, whose sympathy and services had always been at the command of the tinkers. For many years now Miss Hardy has laboured with an affectionate zeal amongst her wandering flock, seeking them out in wooded glen and on heathery hill, and giving unsparingly of her vital energy and tenderest feelings, with little encouragement save the good-will and unswerving love of every tinker man, woman and child. The Church is extremely fortunate in being able to claim her as its missionary to the tinkers, and it will be due in no small measure to the confidence the tinkers have in her if the Church, in its new venture, is able to attain somewhat near the goal it has in view.

Preliminary to this new step, and as a basis upon which to work towards it, a most exhaustive examination of the whole tinker problem as it exists to-day has been made by Miss Dorothea Maitland, who is the Home Mission Committee's honorary agent in this work. Invaluable help has been rendered by a local committee under the Presbytery of Dunkeld with the Rev. Coll Macdonald, D.D., Logierait, as chairman, and by very many public officials and bodies, whose sympathies on behalf of the tinker are real and practical. Though the number of tinkers is small in proportion to the population in Scotland, the life they live and the hardship which they have to endure call for the good services of the Church and command public interest and attention that cannot be denied them.

Note : See Appendix III for The Outline Scheme.

CHAPTER XIV

CHRIST ON HOLIDAY

SUMMER CAMPS AND SEA-SIDE RESORTS

Most of the subjects with which we have been dealing have had their roots well bedded in the past, and have gathered around them certain traditional accretions or secretions, which have gone to make their discussion somewhat problematic. This chapter deals with developments of recent appearance arising, in the case of the summer camps at least, from the conditions attending a war in which the bulk of nation's manhood was engaged. What prompted the first settlers on the foreshores of the Clyde and Forth to begin camping, as we now know it, is not easily stated. It may have been suggested by the freedom of camp life even under military discipline, or, what is more likely, it followed on the economic depression which necessitated an inexpensive mode of living. Anyhow a few of the more daring of our fellow citizens left the houses they had formerly occupied in the grubby streets of our large towns and cities, and began to erect crazy wooden huts, or tents, on any vacant piece of land fringing the sea or the river sides.

Little by little the numbers of families so accommodated increased, till alarm gave way to action, and in many places their removal was enforced, as the existence of their dwellings constituted a

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nuisance. With no sanitary conveniences and no direction or control, it was inevitable that objectionable features should soon make their appearance. But the benefits of an open-air life could not be denied. Under the wise indulgence of Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart, actual prohibition against those town dwellers who had erected summer dwellings for themselves at Lunderston Bay on the Clyde was not enforced, but it was determined to regularise the camp by allocating sites to selected applicants and making provision for conveniences that make such a camp possible. The setting up of this camp, which in the height of the season brought together a heterogeneous gathering of between one and two thousand, presented a problem to the local ministers, who were anxious to bring the influence of the Church to bear on so large a body of people.

The early days of the camp were indescribably pagan. Ministers who endeavoured to hold open-air services in the midst of the huts and tents had to compete, it must be confessed unsuccessfully, with jazz bands and dancing couples, gambling schools and rowdy gangsters. The help of the Church of Scotland Home Mission Committee was called upon, and, immediately, with the co-operation of an excellent local committee of the Presbytery of Greenock, a regularly organised mission was constituted. A marquee was erected, on a site most graciously provided by Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart, and a staff of workers provided, consisting of a minister and medical students.

The whole of the committee's work in connection with campers here and elsewhere owes its undoubted success to the fortunate appointment of

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the Rev. James Francis, B.D., minister of Cartsburn, Greenock, as first camp padre. It was early recognised that no work amongst these campers could hope to succeed, unless it was undertaken by individuals who were prepared to camp alongside them and under conditions similar to which those on the ground were accustomed to endure. It is related that, on the first night the Church's workers took up residence in their tents, a perfect storm and deluge came upon them. The discomforts were so great that the keepers in the Cloch Lighthouse close by offered to take the Church workers under proper shelter, but their invitation was declined by Mr Francis. Ever after, the campers realised that the Church meant business, and through its representatives was neither ashamed nor too self-indulgent to share and share alike in the pleasures and discomforts of the campers. Rapidly the Church's marquee became the centre of all the social life of the camp. It was the recreation tent, post-office, reading room, writing room and office for lost, stolen or strayed properties, human as well as material. But it was first and foremost the place of divine worship where services were held not only morning and evening every Sunday, but every week day morning and evening as well. The provision of a medical clinic presided over by fourth year medical students proved of inestimable service. In the last two years it has been found of great advantage to secure the services of Church Sisters, who have done excellent work amongst the women and children.

Scarcely had the experiment at Lunderston Bay justified itself when a similar camp on the

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Forth at Port Seton was equipped by the Home Mission Committee in like manner. Following that, provision was made for the benefit of campers at Barassie in Ayrshire. These camps consist in the main of three types of campers. Some of the families have more or less permanent huts erected and, in some cases, reside in them all the year round. Others take up their abode in the camp early in the summer, but return to the town or city when the days creep in and the heat of the summer evenings passes away. The majority bring down tents, or rent caravans, for a short holiday period. The peak of the population is reached during the Glasgow trades holidays and those of other industrial centres. When the camps were busiest the total population in all would amount to over 5,000.

The remark of the padre at Barassie in 1931, when the Church's work was first set up there, states very truly the attitude of the people. "The people," he says, "did not know how to take us. They began by being careful. When approached they were most responsive, talking much about themselves if desired. Gradually they came round. They needed us. They could not understand, however, how all this was being done for nothing."

It would tend to weariness if all the details of the work in the various camps were set forth. As a guide, and as representing the maturest side of the work, some notes may be taken from the report on the Lunderston Bay Camp for 1932. In the workers' log book appear the following items expressive of the difficulties constantly met with and of the strenuous labours entailed :—

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"Cleared out half-a-dozen scroungers at 1 a.m.

"Kept eye on marquee till 1.30 a.m.

"Busy till 1.30 with serious medical cases.

"Routed out scroungers at 4.30 a.m."

During one night of fearful rain and wind shutters and table tops were handed out to serve the campers as beds, while fifty had to be accommodated in the marquee.

During this year 2,072 medical cases were reported, and it has to be remembered that this work is only undertaken in the short period of six weeks when the population is at its greatest. In one day the medical students record no less than 142 cases. The religious services have always maintained a fairly good attendance, but the spiritual value of the Church's work is to be estimated in many other respects as well. On the moral and social side the life of the camps has improved enormously through the action of the Church. The convener of the local presbyterial committee reported in 1932 that gambling had no part in the life of the campers at Lunderston Bay. "It is true," he said, "that five years ago (that is when the Church first took action) the Church workers were regarded as intruders. To-day, I do not hesitate to say that it is the gamblers who are so regarded. There has been a complete change of attitude towards the Church—a change effected not by aggressive religious propaganda but by the quiet leavening of the Holy Spirit through the medium of tactful and consecrated Christian workers."

The effect of this seasonal missionary work is far-reaching. While many of the campers are already interested in and take active part in the life

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of the Church, there are very many, indeed a majority, who during their town residence have sat very loosely to a Church or ignored its existence altogether. It is the experience of our workers that many of these, who ordinarily have been careless and indifferent, welcomed the opportunity of worshipping in the less sedate and formal atmosphere of the marquee. Indeed, to many the opportunity is afforded of making a beginning again of sharing in divine worship, not unlikely meeting a desire long deep down in their hearts but held in check in the town by a native shyness or fear of jeering comments by their neighbours. The problem of how to follow up these new beginnings is yet to be solved. Efforts have been made to notify ministers in towns and cities of people with whom the camp workers have made contact, but it is doubtful if great success is the result. Who knows, if once the seed is sown the harvest may not be reaped without the mechanical processes so often attempted.

Knowing the conditions of life in many of the depressed portions of our industrial centres, no one will deny the greater benefits to be found in the life offered in these camps. If, by taking its place in the midst of the campers, the Church be said to be encouraging this life, then, in so doing, it is doing not a little good. The question has been raised if it would not be worth while for the Church to acquire ground and set up camps of its own. The question is not one that is easily answered. Much can be said for the Church venturing on such enterprises ; but, on the whole, this does not seem to be one of its functions. The Church has as much

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as it can do to organise and administer work which makes more immediately for the moral and religious well-being of the people of Scotland. While it may not enter into the field already occupied by private enterprise, it can never fail to take advantage of every such massing together of human souls for the proclamation of Christ's kingdom and for the purifying of public and individual morals.

Nor altogether unrelated to this subject is the concern which the Church ought to have for the present-day condition of life in our most popular sea-side resorts during the summer months. In all of our coast towns the Church is amply equipped to meet the requirements of the resident population. In years gone by when the influx of summer visitors took place, the local churches were full to overflowing, and the larger congregations, with fresh and vigorous mentality, gave heart and encouragement to the ministers and office bearers, which carried them on from summer to summer.

The position to-day is vastly altered. Many visitors would never dream of forsaking the assembling of themselves together to praise the God of their lives in His House of Prayer, no matter where they may be. But a Sunday in many of our seaside resorts to-day is a sad spectacle to the older natives and the more staid of our people. The modern conveniences of motor transport and Sunday trains, together with a less scrupulous regard for Sunday closing on the part of many of the smaller and alien shop-keepers, have contributed to a state of affairs which makes the Sunday often a busier and more frivolous day than any other day of the week. The shore is occupied not only by the

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youth with post-war outlook and sense of freedom, but also by old and tired-looking men and women, who appear as though they welcomed escape from the dismal colliery rows or the hot and dusty city streets. These people throng the town in their hundreds and thousands, and though the Churches be fuller than usual they seem to receive the consideration of only an insignificant proportion of the augmented population. Has the Church nothing to suggest which would recognise the change of circumstances and yet keep alive in the souls of these people the sense of the presence of God ?

Be it said that there is no appearance at least of any contempt for the purpose of the Church, and no suggestion that the behaviour of the people is in any way positively evil. In many places the bulk of the people are day visitors. It may be many of them are Roman Catholics, who have attended Mass in the early part of the day before leaving home. Let us hope so. Many of them may be Protestants who similarly have attended Church in the forenoon and have arrived in the afternoon in buses from nearby towns and villages. Yet their summer garb would suggest otherwise, and the casual attendance of so many of our Church members, in summer time particularly, does not altogether favour this idea. Undoubtedly the position is beyond the ability of the local ministers to meet. In some of the coast towns missions have been held on the sands, mostly for the benefit of the children. But these do not touch more than the fringe of the problem, and mainly appeal to the section of the population who require them least.

The suggestion is thrown out for what it is worth

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that the Home Mission Committee might be ready to provide special ministerial missionaries, who, under the guidance and with the co-operation of the local ministers, would conduct short and attractive services on the sands and where the summer populations tend to congregate. It is neither fair, nor in many cases possible, to expect the local ministers to undertake such services in addition to those for which they are responsible in their Churches. It would require, of course, ministers with special aptitude for such services, and it would fail of its main purpose if it were thought that such special mission work could be adequately done by divinity students or lay missionaries. The Church must realise that in this it must give of its best and be worthily represented, or not at all. In anything that can be done by the Church, full recognition must be taken of the changed outlook of this and coming generations. It may be that the swing of the pendulum will make for a deepening of the spiritual life of our people. Our faith in the work of the Church demands that. Yet the form of religious observance, if it be more universal than appears at present, will not conform to old customs and retain old methods. Full weight in any scheme of the Church's devising must be given to the broader and saner, because healthier, outlook of modern life. The sense of God's presence and delight in the joys of the gleaming sands and the sparkling waves are in no sense incompatible. Human nature will no longer stand for the suggestion of evil in the full enjoyment of that life which God has given us to live.

CHAPTER XV

AWAY FROM HOME, AND WHO CARES ?

SEASONAL WORKERS

ONLY a small percentage of the nation is conscious of the fact that in Scotland there is much in the nature of seasonal work undertaken from year to year. Such as do know are not always persuaded that its success or failure is of outstanding importance to the prosperity of the country. Probably, owing to the amount of publicity which has been given to the East Anglian fishing season, these generalisations ought to be modified so far as the herring industry is concerned. This industry has presently reached a crisis which calls for close attention. The number of Scots fishermen, girls, and shore workers engaged in it cannot be estimated at much short of 20,000, while the number of individuals affected by its conditions may easily run to well over 100,000. The work begins early in the year, centring at Barra in the Hebrides, moving at irregular stages to Stronsay in Orkney, Lerwick in Shetland, Fraserburgh and Peterhead on the north-east coast of Scotland, and finishing for the season at Yarmouth and Lowestoft on the east coast of England. It would be easy, if unnecessary at the moment, to name the specific islands and townships which depend to a very large extent on this industry. Let it suffice to indicate that, if the herring industry

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be lost to Scotland, some areas will feel the effect but little while others will be almost blotted out unless some other source of livelihood be discovered.

This is yet another means of support to our fellow countrymen which reached its maximum in the years immediately preceding the war, and which has since declined to a point approaching disaster. In 1913, 440,000 tons of salted herring were exported from Britain, while the exact figure for 1932 was only 160,000 tons. This meant a difference of nearly three million pounds to this country. At present all sorts of schemes are being suggested to create markets or to bolster up the industry by subsidy, but nothing seems surer than that the supremacy, at least, of the country in this trade is gone for good. Britain is meeting the fate it relentlessly handed out to other countries in days gone by. Holland can tell her tale of similar treatment, and Norway and Sweden before her. It is too early to declare with certainty that the herring industry is going entirely from Scotland. With conscious pride we can remind ourselves of a wonderful adaptability to changing conditions and of an indomitable enterprise in our own people, and it may easily prove true that our fishermen are not yet at the end of their tether. But the trade is meanwhile in bewilderment, and it lacks leadership and finance to guide it through the existing shallows.

Meanwhile the Church is naturally concerned for the condition of so many of its people. The depression, if not actual starvation, which will lie at the doors of so many homes, particularly in the north-east of Scotland, calls for the sympathetic consideration of the Church. It may find here an

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opportunity for manifesting some of the practical benefits of its Christian fellowship. The Church of Scotland in older times did not hesitate when there was need—even so local and trivial a need as a new bridge—to call upon all its congregations throughout the land to give of their means to the distressed areas. However small the response might be in these later days, such action would be an earnest of the profound interest of all Christian people.

This seasonal work has entailed the gathering together of large numbers of our people at fishing centres for long and short periods. The class of men and women so gathered together has at all times been one of the most devout of our people, and it has never been any trouble to ensure a response to the Church's interest in it. From the first day the fishing boats sail into the harbour till they pass out again in search of new fishing grounds, the Church cares for the spiritual and social well-being of the workers. Preaching deputies, able to address the congregations in English and Gaelic, are in constant attendance, while numbers of women workers minister to the physical and moral needs of the fisher folk in dressing station and rest room. Between thirty and forty Church workers are employed each season, some of them going from centre to centre as the fleet moves on.

Only those who have seen this piece of Home Mission work in operation have any idea of its value. It is not evangelical in the sense that it is active service to the unconverted. But it is keeping alive in the souls of our own good people the faith they found in the home church, and the Christian life they learned in the homes of their parents.

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The Church has always welcomed the opportunity afforded it of providing dressing stations where the wounds and sores incidental to the rough work are tended. According to the orders of the Board of Trade, every fishcurer is expected to see that provision is made, accessible to his curing yard, where first aid treatment can be secured by his workers. To meet this requirement a considerable overhead cost would fall on the industry. The curer is relieved of this by the action of the Church. He is under moral obligation, as an alternative, to pay five shillings per crew of three girls to the Church, which has set up and operates the dressing station nearest his yard. The majority of curers never fail to meet this obligation, but there are others who do not seem to realise any shame in evading payment, though their workers are cared for by the Church.

As with every form of Church work which combines different types of service, it is perhaps almost inevitable that emphasis becomes displaced, too much attention being given to the purely medical side and too little to what ought really to be the first concern of the Church's workers. The temptations which beset these people far from their homes are not all on the surface. More than ordinary care should be exercised in protecting them from association with the undesirable elements which gravitate to towns where an alien population gathers on occasion. No more need be said than this. Anyone who has more than passing interest in Home Mission work will understand what is suggested. The difficulties in counteracting this evil are great. Sometimes one is tempted to wonder why local authorities do not exercise a greater measure of their

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authority in securing the exclusion of undesirables. The worst types, at any rate, are well known, and ought certainly to be dealt with. There is very good reason to extol the high moral tone of the workers in the herring industry, but it is foolish to make that any justification for ignoring the intensive temptation which is peculiar to any community where an influx of population takes place at regular periods.

The Church ought to take special interest in the housing of these seasonal workers. The crews of fishermen find accommodation on their boats. But the shore workers and the girls have to find lodging where they can. Some of these are excellent, but there are landladies and landladies, and the girls especially are easy game in a busy season. Far more attention requires to be given to the conditions in which these workers lodge. The Church workers must realise that visitation, systematic and regular, is essential. This part of their work may not be spectacular, but it is important and immensely beneficial, if carried out with a real understanding of its purpose.

If the standard forms of agriculture are suffering diminution in Scotland, the cultivation of fruit is increasing year by year. It is no unusual thing to see fields covered with raspberry canes, and all the necessary huts and erections close by for the harvesting and marketing of the crops. There has been established for many years now quite a fruit-growing industry round about Blairgowrie, Coupar Angus, Auchterarder and Longforgan. For the most part of the year the amount of labour required per acre is very small indeed, but when the berries are

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ripening the farmers can scarcely get enough workers to pick and pack. The season seldom extends beyond a month or six weeks. Casual workers from the cities, and tinkers, rush to the scenes of operation, not only singly, but in families with old and young alike. Certain of the farms will employ only the very best class of pickers, and among them it is not unusual to find students and teachers working. Roughly speaking, however, on many of the farms the class of worker is of a very low grade. Perhaps because the season is so short, not too much attention is paid to the accommodation provided for the workers. The tinkers and hawkers mostly provide their own shelter, which may offer sufficient cover in good weather, but is terrible in a rainy season.

The work in the fields is healthy and not at all disagreeable. The farmer naturally is never anxious for any slack periods, and if the weather is favourable, work goes on as long as the workers and light will permit. With the increase of population and the nature of it, the local churches find themselves unable to cope with the situation. Apart from the ministerial assistance which is called for, very much medical and social service is rendered by Home Mission agents. It would seem as if in the course of such healthy work we ought to expect a minimum of ailments or accidents. Yet the low type of workers employed and the conditions under which many of them are housed, make the general health of the communities something to be deplored. The medical students appointed to a group of fruit farms have on many occasions reported as many as 40 cases a day, where the number of pickers does not exceed four or five hundred, while all over the short season

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as many as 206 cases have been registered at one centre.

Everyone who has live interest in human well-being and is aware of the circumstances incidental to this seasonal work, will look forward to the time when more generous treatment will be afforded the workers. There are exceptions, but, in far too many instances, the fruit farmer has little concern beyond the amount of pulp he can market and the price he can get. The Church is endeavouring by every means in its power to give the workers the sense that at least some one cares for their well-being. Beyond the ordinary services and Sunday Schools held in the marquees and huts, concerts are arranged for, literature and games are provided, old clothing is distributed, and a savings bank is instituted.

The curse to many of the berry pickers away from home is the opportunity easily secured for drinking and gambling. It is inconceivable that a place like Blairgowrie should not be able to rid itself of the cause for so much of the intoxication which vitiates the district during the fruit season, but apparently neither the local authority nor local opinion seems strong enough to prevent the acquiring of "Red Biddy." The "Red Biddy" drinkers buy some cheap wine in a grocer's shop or public house, and then are able to obtain methylated spirits elsewhere in order to mix them together. The results are appalling. Fortunately a movement has been instituted by the city of Glasgow in co-operation with other authorities to ask for powers to make the purchase of methylated spirits a much more difficult matter than at present. The suggestion is that its

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sale be in the hands of chemists only, who shall require to register each sale.

By the provision of coffee vans the local church committee is endeavouring to promote temperance, but much more drastic measures are called for and ought to be taken. The Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children issue a most comforting account of their investigation of the conditions prevailing at the fruit farms. Whoever made their investigations must have known the conditions in the earlier years of this industry, when there was so much which was positively bestial, and from this memory have felt cause to make rather favourable comment. But the day is still distant when the country should be satisfied. There is a vast difference between the provision made, say at the Gothens Farm, where the farmer has shewn real concern for the comfort of his workers, and the provision made at some other places where, even yet, the farm animals are as well cared for.

The old Scottish Navy Mission, which did excellent work in its day amongst the labourers in large public works, is dead. Its departure is genuinely regretted. The Church has gladly taken its place, and a missionary works amongst the men at the Galloway Power Scheme near Dalry in Galloway, while another is employed, sometimes amongst the road workers, and at present in Glenbranter where unemployed men are being trained in forestry. The experience of the Church in connection with this work is that, on an average, about sixty per cent of the workers are Roman Catholic. A perfervid Scot is apt to resent what this suggests, namely, that the majority of the men

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employed came from Ireland. Yet it is well to face up to the fact, which is borne out time and again in this class of work, that the Irish labourer has proved himself easily the most satisfactory workman. It is often retorted that only Irishmen will tolerate the hard conditions suffered in connection with such work. But there is nothing in that. There are no conditions which a reasonable workman should not be ready to accept. The truth is the Irishman is strong, hardy, and not afraid to work. He is not so terribly and unnecessarily concerned about his rights as the Scot. This opinion is accepted with reluctance, but it must be recorded. Farmers who employ many Irish people in connection with potato-lifting and turnip shawing have the same tale to tell. It is the Scot who is supporting the house corners in our towns, while he grumbles at the employment of the alien.

The Church is always ready to interest itself in any gathering of people for seasonal work. It has not reached the stage when it can employ a mobile force of workers suited to all the varying types of seasonal labourers, but it is able to command the temporary services of ministers, students, and women-workers, who voluntarily give their time and talents to this form of evangelism. The Church has reason to be grateful to many public bodies and many employers of labour, whose sympathy with the Christian ideal finds real and practical expression. But one suggestion on public service ought to be offered in connection with the employment of seasonal workers. The time has surely arrived when public officials, such as medical officers and sanitary inspectors, should be entirely free from the control of local bodies. If

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these officials, whose concern is the health and conditions of the people, were absolutely free to insist on alterations and amendments which they know to be advisable if not necessary, an immense advance in the well-being of the nation would follow. As a rule these men are conscientious and efficient, but they are human beings with family responsibilities which they must do all in their power to safeguard. It is not in everyone's power to be absolutely independent, and none of them should be within reach of the vested interests and selfish domination of the local employer who finds it advantageous to be on public bodies. This is not outwith the concern of the Church, and the Church has a right to seek any methods which will make for the betterment of the people whose bodies as well as souls it seeks to save.

CHAPTER XVI

ALL THE SAME A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE

A CENTURY OF HOME MISSION WORK

IN the General Assembly of 1828 an overture anent Church accommodation was called for, produced, and read, when it was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed, that "a committee be appointed to collect information on this deeply important subject ; to represent the evils resulting from the inadequate state of Church accommodation in many of the large towns, manufacturing villages, and populous parishes of the country, and, without delay, to take such measures as, to them, may seem best calculated, by bringing the subject under the notice of the government, or otherwise, to procure ultimately a remedy for so alarming an evil, and, if necessary, to apply for the advice and assistance of the Commission of the Church, which the commission is hereby required to give to the committee." The committee was reappointed annually until 1834, when it was established by the General Assembly in permanent form.

In that year, Dr. Brunton, convener, reported that his committee had endeavoured to discharge the duty committed to them, by making repeated and urgent applications to His Majesty's govern-

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ment, but hitherto with a total want of success. Individual members of the committee proceeded to obtain correct information on the precise amount of population with the deficiency of church accommodation within the establishment throughout the various synods of the Church. The returns were not as complete as might be desired, but enough was shown to create an imperative demand for immediate action. The City of Edinburgh showed a population of 54,992, and sittings "in the Establishment" for only 14,629, while St. Cuthbert's offered 10,862 sittings for a population of 72,000. The City of Glasgow and the Barony with a population of 166,385 could only accommodate 27,000 in their Churches. Such deficiencies prevailed in large stretches of the country, and private societies were formed in various quarters to secure the extension of Church accommodation.

In his Report submitted in 1835, Dr Chalmers, now convener, observed that 64 new places of worship were completed or were in preparation, the sum total of general and local subscriptions amounting to £66,326.

In a memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister, it was stated that at the beginning of the eighteenth century the population in Scotland did not exceed one million. At the census, 1831, it was found to amount to two million three hundred and sixty thousand. It was found also that the number of parish churches continued nearly the same as when Scotland did not contain half the number of its (present) inhabitants. Chapels of ease had been erected but "your memorialists are

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ready to show that all the efforts of what may be called the voluntary system within the Establishment have been altogether insufficient to supply the wants of the people." In a circular issued by Dr Chalmers in 1834, he stated that "the result of certain statistical enquiries taken at random in various localities, and therefore exhibiting the average state of the lower classes in and about Edinburgh, is that not one in eight of the whole population in this range of society attend any place of worship whatever, whether in or out of Establishment."

This committee, formed in 1834, was called the Assembly's Committee on Church Extension, and continued as such till the year 1842, when the General Assembly appointed a committee, to be called the Home Mission Committee, to take charge of the objects formerly carried on by separate committees called—The Church Extension Committee, The Committee for Aiding Congregations Already Established, The Committee for the Employment of Probationers, and The Committee for the Encouragement of Young Men to the Office of the Ministry.

In the Assembly preceding the Disruption, it was reported that over £300,000 had been raised for Church Extension by means of which 178 Churches had been built, and 32 were in a state of progress. 1843 brought a period of abeyance in Church Extension, but the work never quite ceased, and consolidations of existing mission stations received attention. The question of endowing the new churches engaged the committee for many years, and the position of *Quoad Sacra* congregations

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proved a matter of considerable anxiety. The bitterness consequent on 1843 held its own sweetness, for it is an undoubted fact that the rivalry created proved a wonderful stimulus to the people of Scotland to continue what had been so zealously begun before Disruption towards meeting the religious needs of a rapidly increasing population. The situation necessarily underwent a great change through the efforts of the Free Church to establish its position in the land, and only occasional need remained to the Church of Scotland for new buildings and charges.

An interesting paragraph appears in the Report presented to the Assembly in 1867. The committee, ever watchful of the growth of population throughout the land, were struck with the rapid developments in Glasgow, while the proportion of pauper relief called for special comment. "Indeed," the Report reads, "with 100,000 paupers out of a population of three million (*that is every thirtieth person supported by legal assessment*), and with need of £800,000 sterling spent every year in their relief, it is now imperative that greater efforts should be made for bringing the whole people under religious influences." That same year the committee directed their attention to the condition of several of "our seaport and other parishes in summer, where for three or four months an immense population from the large towns reside." Summer preachers were provided, in one case for three months at a salary of £20. Fishermen also received the attention of this diligent committee, railway missions were established among the navvies employed in the formation of the railways, and a

THE SAME A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE

Home Evangelisation Branch was inaugurated for "Families to whom even stated employment is a luxury unknown ; to whom the interior of a Church and its services are utterly strange."

Home Mission work never lacked opportunity. Little isolated communities required attention, and the habits of the people began to demand a closer personal touch with religious leaders, and a place of worship more accessible to their homes. The old zeal of the religious Scot which prompted him to walk miles to church and sit there for two hours twice a day at least suffered sadly in the eighties and nineties of last century, till now it is thought of as one of the peculiarities of a dull age.

It can easily be noted that the practical problems of ecclesiastical life in Scotland do not greatly vary. The work is more intensive to-day and, if anything, is more sympathetically backed by the congregations of the Church whose liberality has nobly maintained the unceasing labours of its Committee. Numberless other religious organisations have worthily contributed towards the attack on spiritual apathy and deadness, but the Church has quietly and effectively strengthened the means and methods at her disposal, making it one of the essentials of her work that all her Home Mission enterprise be based on the territorial principle.

Through turbulent times and disheartening difficulties the two great Presbyterian Churches of Scotland have tackled their Home Mission problem with courage and wise foresight. United as one Church to-day our people are faced with a defiant spirit of non-church-going, which is estimated as dominating one-third of the adult population, but the

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history of the last hundred years does not warrant the charge that the Church has been waging a losing battle. Instead, it may well be said that more of the population than ever are influenced by the Church, and a deeper, truer sense of religious obligation is awake in the land. There is so much to be done, ways and means to be devised, and ever quickening public opinion to be created, a more Christ-like sense of duty on the part of the several congregations towards those without to be realised, but with a reunited Church setting out on her labours at the beginning of a new century a Christian Scotland is something more than a vision, it is a promise waiting acceptance by a divinely inspired Church.

BOOKS TO BE CONSULTED

- Social Life in Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*
—H. G. Graham.
- The Scotland of our Fathers*—Elizabeth Haldane.
- The History of the Working Classes in Scotland*
—Thomas Johnston.
- Rise and Progress of Scottish Education*—Alex. Morgan.
- The Industrial Revolution in Scotland*—Henry Hamilton.
- Scottish Abbeys and Social Life*—Coulton.
- History of Scotland*—R. S. Rait.
- History of Scotland*—Hume Brown.
- History of Scotland*—Andrew Lang.
- Everyday Life in Old Scotland*—I. F. Grant.
- Social and Industrial History of Scotland from the Union to
the present time*—James MacKinnon.
- History of Highland Clearances*—Alex. Mackenzie.
- A Highland Parish*—Norman MacLeod.
- Highland Reconstruction*—H. F. Campbell.
- The Presbyterian Tradition*—C. L. Warr.
- The Presbyterian Churches*—James Moffatt.
- Problems of Village Life*—E. N. Bennett.
- The Village Community*—G. L. Gomme.
- Architects' Journal*, 1933.
- Report of Edinburgh Welfare Housing Trust, Ltd.*
- Some Experiments in Housing, Glasgow Workmen's
Dwellings, Co. Ltd.*
- The Parish Minister and his Duties*—Oswald Dykes.
- The Christian Minister, His Aims and Methods*
—James Robertson.
- Pastoral Counsels*—John Robertson.
- Pastoral Work*—R. C. Joynt.
- The Scottish Churches' Handbook*—D. P. Thomson.

BOOKS TO BE CONSULTED

The Church of Scotland Year Book.

Evangelical Influence in English Life—J. T. Inskip.

Evangelism, A Re-interpretation, edited by E. Aldam French.

For Sinners Only—Russell.

Modern Evangelistic Movements—Two University Men.

Evangelism in the Modern World.

The Impatience of a Parson—H. R. L. Sheppard.

Effective Evangelism—Lionel B. Fletcher.

The Church and Social Betterment—J. W. Harper.

Katherine Scott—G. F. Barbour.

The Tramp—Frank Gray.

Tramping with Tramps—F. L. Jennings.

The Challenge of the Slums—C. Gorbett.

The Churches' Task in Social Reform (Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1912).

Problems of Poverty—Thomas Chalmers.

Social Evils and Problems (Blackwood, 1919).

Reports of the Church of Scotland Committees.

Reports of the Scottish Board of Health, the Department of Agriculture, and others.

APPENDIX I

LIST of CHARGES where a knowledge of Gaelic is returned as (a) Necessary or (b) Desirable, extracted from the Report of the Highlands and Islands Committee to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, dated 27th May, 1908.

EDINBURGH :

(a) St. Oran's.

PAISLEY :

(a) Gaelic Church.

DUMBARTON :

(a) Strathfillan.

GLASGOW :

(a) St. Columba and St. Kieran.

INVERARAY :

(a) All.

DUNOON :

(a) Kilfinan, Kilmodan, Lochgoilhead and Kilmorich, Kilbride Chapel, Rothsay Gaelic Chapel, Strachur and Strathlachlan.

KINTYRE :

(a) Campbeltown (1st charge), Gigha, Kilcalmonell, Kilbride, Killeen, Kilmory, Saddell, Skipness, Southend, Lochranza Chapel.

ISLAY AND JURA :

(a) All.

LORN :

(a) All except St. Columba, Oban.

MULL :

(a) All.

ABERTARFF :

(a) All except (b) Fort Augustus, Glengarry, and Duncansburgh.

DUNKELD :

(b) Blair-Atholl.

WEEM :

(b) All.

AUCHTERARDER :

None.

DUNBLANE :

(b) Balquidder.

ABERNETHY :

(a) Abernethy, Alvie, Kingussie, Duthil, Laggan.

(b) Insh, Rothiemurchus.

INVERNESS :

(a) Daviot, Dores, Erchless, Glenmoriston, Inverness (Gaelic Charge), Kiltarlity, Kirkhill, Moy, Petty, and Urquhart.

CHANONRY :

(a) Killearnan, Knockbain, and Resolis.

DINGWALL :

(a) Contin, Kilmorack.

(b) Carnoch, Fodderty, Kinlochluichart, Urquhart, Urray.

TAIN :

(b) All.

DORNOCH :

(a) Assynt, Creich, Dornoch, Lairg, Rogart, and Stoer.

TONGUE :

(a) All.

CAITHNESS :

(a) Reay, Shurrey.

(b) Latheron and Lybster.

LOCHCARRON :

(a) All.

SKYE :

(a) All.

UIST :

(a) All.

LEWIS :

(a) All.

APPENDIX I

LIST of CHARGES in which a knowledge of Gaelic is returned as (a) Necessary or (b) Desirable, extracted from the Report of the Highlands and Islands Committee to the General Assembly, dated 26th May, 1933.

INVERARAY :

- (a) Craignish; Glassary Kilmichael; Kilmartin; Knapdale South; Lochgilphead; North Knapdale, Inverlussa and Bellanoch.
- (b) Ardrishaig Rhu; Cumlodden and Lochfyneside; Glenaray and Inveraray; Lochgilphead West; North Knapdale, Tayvallich; Tarbert West.

DUNOON :

- (a) Kilfinan and Kilbride; Kilmodan; Lochgoilhead, The Three Brethern; Strachur East.

KINTYRE :

- (a) Gigha and Cara; Killeen and Kilchenzie; Skipness.
- (b) Campbeltown, Highland Charge; Kilcalmonell and Kilberry; Saddell; Southend (St. Blaen).

ISLAY :

- (a) In all.

LORN :

- (a) Appin, Glencreran Mission; Ardchattan; Connel; Duror; Glencoe; Glenorchy and Inishail; Kilbrandon and Kilchattan; Kilchrenan and Dalavich; Kilmore and Kilbride; Kilniver and Kilmelford; Lismore; Muckairn; Oban, Old Parish.
- (b) Appin, St. Moluag's; Ballachulish South; Benderloch; Oban, Argyll Square, Dunollie Road; Strathfillan.

MULL :

- (a) In all.

LOCHABER :

- (a) Acharacle; Ardgour; Kilmallie, Strontian.
- (b) Arisaig and Moidart; Ballachulish; Fort Augustus, Abergarff; Fort William, Duncansburgh, MacIntosh Memorial; Glengarry; Kilmonivaig; Knoydart.

DUNKELD :

- (b) Amulree; Blair Atholl, Blair, Struan and Trinafour, St. Andrew's; Braes of Rannoch; Dull; Fortingall, East, West; Foss and Tummel; Glen Lyon; Grantully; Kenmore; Kinloch Rannoch; Lawers; Logierait; Strathtay; Tenandry; Weem.

ABERNETHY :

No reply.

INVERNESS :

- (a) Boleskine; Daviot and Dunlichty; Dores; Inverness—St. Mary's; Kilmore; Kiltarlity, West; Moy, Dalarossie and Tomatin; Petty, St. Columba.
- (b) Glenmoriston; Inverness—Queen Street; Kiltarlity, East; Kirkhill, St. Mary's, Wardlaw; Stratherrick.

DINGWALL :

- (a) Dundonnell; Lochbroom; Ullapool.
- (b) Carnoch, Strathconnan; Contin; Ferintosh and Maryburgh; Fodderty; Fortrose; Killearnan; Kilmorack; Kiltearn; Kinlochluichart and Strathgarve; Redcastle; Resolis; Urray, East.

TAIN :

- (a) Fearn Central.
- (b) In all except Fearn Central.

DORNOCH :

- (a) Assynt and Stoer; Inchadamph and Elphin.
- (b) Brora; Dornoch, West, Golspie Fountain Road; Helmsdale Bunilidh; Rogart, Pitfure; Rosehall.

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TONGUE :

- (a) Durness; Farr — High, St. Columba; Kinlochbervie; Melness and Eribol; Strathy and Halladale.
- (b) Altnaharra; Eddrachillis; Tongue, St. Andrew's, Strath Tongue.

LOHCARRON :

- (a) In all.

SKYE :

- (a) In all.

UIST :

- (a) In all.

LEWIS :

- (a) In all except Stornaway, Martin's Memorial.

NOTE : For comparison between the two lists it must be borne in mind that the first made up in 1908 contains pre-union Church of Scotland charges only. No similar list exists of the corresponding Gaelic charges in the former United Free Church.

APPENDIX II

MISSION TO TINKERS

THE AIM

The Home Mission Committee, under the authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, having given particular attention to the increasing problem of vagrancy throughout Scotland in recent years, and in particular to the conditions in which the tinker families exist, has set before it the aim to form small camps under supervision, where provision can be made for the education of the children and steps taken for the permanent improvement of their conditions.

The Committee is stimulated in its endeavour by the information presented to it in an account of the Hurtwood Common Gipsy Settlement, where work of this nature has been so successfully carried on. The committee is prepared to experiment along similar lines as indicated in the following scheme :—

CAMPING GROUNDS

1. Endeavour will be made to obtain camping grounds in Perthshire, where a selected number of tinker families will be allowed to camp.
2. The camping grounds so secured would not be free to all-comers, tinker or otherwise, but would be available to tinker families, preferably with a Perthshire connection, who receive permits to camp from the Committee or the Committee's representative.
3. One primary condition of residence in a permit camp will be that the children give regular school attendance.

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4. The camping grounds would be available by permit from, say, the middle of September to the middle of May, in order to cover the period of schooling necessary for the children.

5. It is suggested that the camping grounds might be roughly within an area extending from Birnam on the south to Killiecrankie on the north.

6. The Committee desires to acquire the use of ground now open to camps, preferably ground formerly used by tinkers.

ADMINISTRATION

1. The Committee would employ and pay for a male ranger, whose duty it would be to supervise permit camps and enforce the rules, checking and issuing permits and preventing abuse of the privileges given.

2. A local Committee would be formed of people with a knowledge and experience of tinkers and interested in the work ; this local Committee to direct the work of the ranger, discuss matters of discipline, the welfare of the children and young people, and generally promote the aim of the Home Mission Committee.

3. The Church will provide neither tents nor similar shelters, and every endeavour will be made to avoid unnecessary interference with the lives of the campers.

EMPLOYMENT

The Church cannot undertake to find work for tinkers camping under its permit, but it will do its utmost to assist as opportunity arises. Tinkers who are basket-makers will be encouraged in this trade, while every possible help will be given towards the learning of new crafts and the equipment of the tinker family, so that they may take their places in the ordinary normal life of the community. It will especially endeavour to discourage begging and to promote seasonal and permanent employment.

APPENDIX II

EDUCATION

1. The Committee, believing that the tinker problem can be solved satisfactorily only through the improvement of their family life and the better education of parents and children, proposes to supply a class-room to accommodate the children resident in the camps, if it is not found convenient or expedient to accommodate them in an existing school.

2. While the school would temporarily and at the first instance be under the management of the Home Mission Committee in consultation with the Education Committee, the Church would seek early conference with the Education Committee as to their taking over the maintenance and future provision of the school.

APPENDIX III

REPORT OF DOOR TO DOOR SURVEY IN A SECTION OF A PARISH.

Number of FAMILIES connected with

Name of Street	The Parish Church Members	The Parish Church Adherents	Other Parish Churches	Wesleyan Church	Baptist Church	Catholic Apostolic Church	Unitarian Church	Mission Stations	Salvation Army	Spiritualists	Congregational Churches	Original Churches	Free Church	Episcopal Church in Scotland	Protestant Churches not ascert'd	Roman Catholic Church	No Church Connection	Connection not discovered
Pitt Street	18	4	39	—	2	1	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	19	—	28	2	11
Park Street	4	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	1	4	2	2
Peel Street	27	15	41	1	5	2	—	2	2	2	1	—	—	38	10	77	22	49
Pint Street	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	1	1	—
Pride Street	5	1	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	1	1	5
Plum Street	3	3	39	—	5	2	1	—	—	—	3	—	2	11	15	16	4	15
Pool Street	5	3	15	1	4	—	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	4	6	15	3	7
Praed Street	1	3	17	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	1	—	11	7	9	10	3
Port Street	8	3	23	—	4	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	1	11	7	15	7	29
Total	72	32	192	2	22	5	4	5	6	3	7	1	3	102	48	166	52	121

NOTE.—The actual names of the streets are altered for obvious reasons.

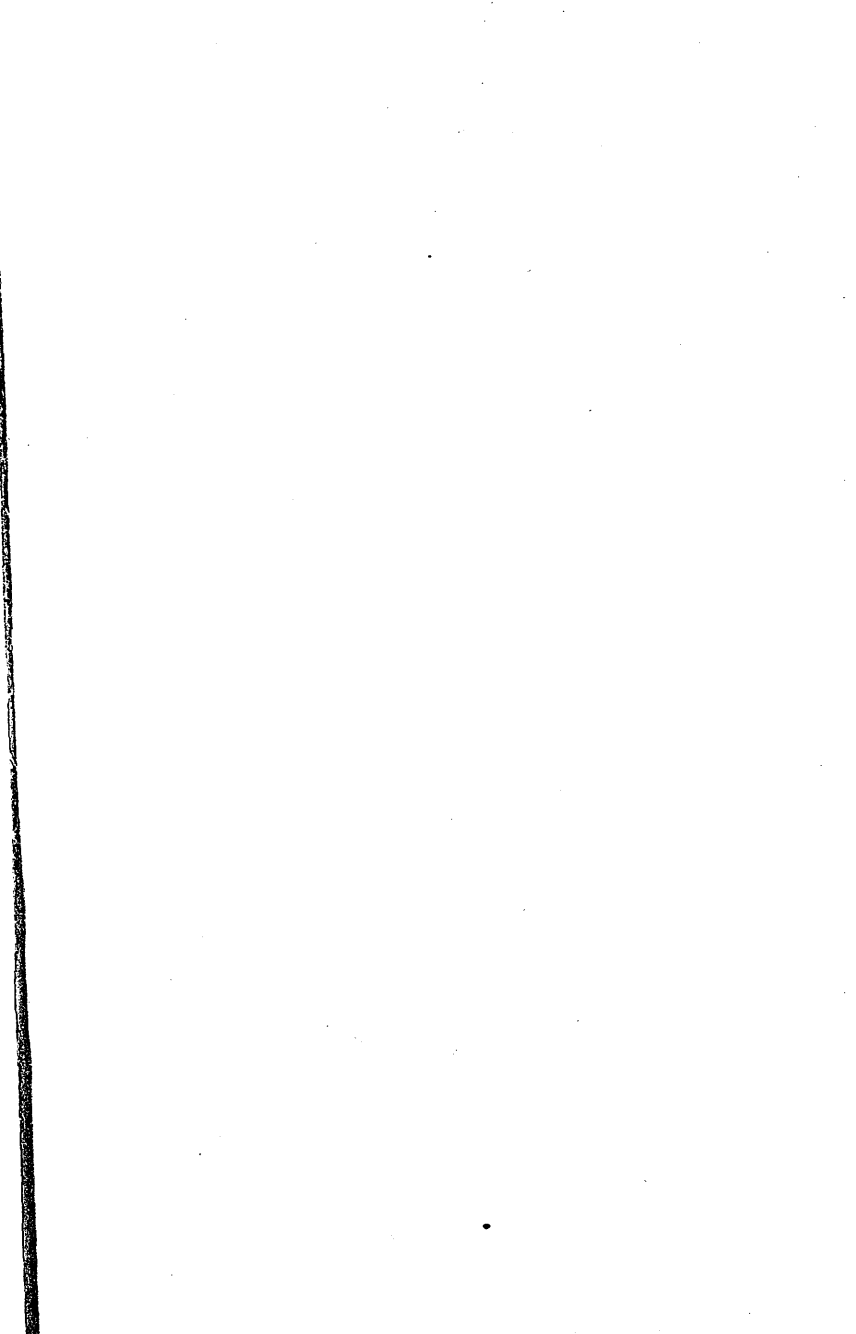
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